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# COLONEL JOHN QUINCY

OF

MOUNT WOLLASTON

1689-1767

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A Public Character

of

New England's Provincial Period

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GEO. H. ELLIS CO.

BOSTON

1909













JOHN QUINCY

[Only extant Portrait]

# JOHN QUINCY

MASTER OF MOUNT WOLLASTON; PROVINCIAL STATESMAN; COLONEL  
OF THE SUFFOLK REGIMENT; SPEAKER OF THE MASSACHU-  
SETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; MEMBER  
OF HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL

## AN ADDRESS

*Delivered Sunday, February 23, 1908*

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
QUINCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY

DANIEL MUNRO WILSON

PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

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BOSTON

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, 272 CONGRESS STREET

1909



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CHAS.  
Chas. Francis Adams.  
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*WITH COMPLIMENTS OF*

**CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS,**

**84 STATE STREET, BOSTON.**



## PREFACE.

The address printed in the following pages was delivered at a celebration held in honor of John Quincy in the house of worship of First Church, Quincy, Mass., February 23, 1908. Owing to its length, a part of it only was then made use of. While this service, the first formal recognition of the eminently useful career, both public and private, of John Quincy, was held in view, it was contemplated to perpetuate his memory still further by some suitable publication. Thus the address naturally developed into what closely resembles a memoir, in the preparation of which I have had the pleasure of being practically a collaborator with Charles F. Adams, second of the name. Indeed, such rescue from oblivion of one who, in his day, "was as much esteemed as any man in the province," is another of the things done by Mr. Adams to honor his fathers and perpetuate in memory what is both veracious and noble in the traditions of Old Braintree and Quincy. A large, if not the larger, part of what is here set down is distinctly from his pen. In Larned's "Literature of American History" it is stated that "no more trustworthy delineation of a New England town has ever been written than that to be found in the 'Three Episodes of Massachusetts History.'" The story of a

## PREFACE.

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typical Massachusetts community, with the Puritan Commonwealth for a background, it furnished a succinct account of Colonel Quincy, and a wise estimate of his character and influence. All this I took bodily from Mr. Adams's narrative; and, when additional facts had been elsewhere exhumed, the whole was submitted to Mr. Adams. Not only did he then subject the material to a thorough revision, but he gave to it an historical setting by means of which the chief figure is brought into scenic relations with the men and movements of his period. This has, in my judgment, greatly enhanced the value of the production, making of it, I venture to hope, a not unworthy interpretation of the terse inscriptions on mural tablet and cemetery monument.

DANIEL MUNRO WILSON.

JULY, 1908.



## QUINCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

### *President.*

BROOKS ADAMS.

### *Vice-President.*

FRED B. RICE.

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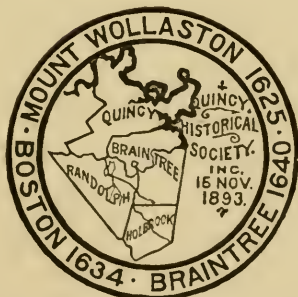
EMERY L. CRANE.

GEORGE W. MORTON.

JAMES L. EDWARDS.

WILLIAM G. PATTEE.

FRED B. RICE.



Ushers chosen for the John Quincy Memorial Celebration: THOMAS FENNO, CHARLES A. PRICE, CHARLES H. JOHNSON, JAMES L. EDWARDS, H. HOUGHTON SCHUMACHER, EMERY L. CRANE.

## QUINCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF

COLONEL JOHN QUINCY

*Who died in 1767, and whose Name was given to this Town when it was set off from  
Braintree, February 22, 1792.*

I. ORGAN VOLUNTARY.

II. READING OF SCRIPTURES, *Rev. Ellery Channing Butler.*

III. PRAYER, *Rev. Edwin Noah Hardy.*

IV. HYMN, *by Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

We love the venerable house	From humble tenements around
Our fathers built to God;	Came up the pensive train,
In heaven are kept their grateful vows,	And in the church a blessing found,
Their dust endears the sod.	Which filled their homes again.
Here holy thoughts a light have shed	They live with God, their homes are dust;
From many a radiant face,	But here their children pray,
And prayers of tender hope have spread	And, in this fleeting lifetime, trust
A perfume through the place.	To find the narrow way.

V. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, *Brooks Adams, Esq.*

VI. HISTORICAL ADDRESS, *Rev. Daniel Munro Wilson.*

VII. HYMN, *by William Parsons Lunt.*

When driven by oppression's rod,	The altar and the school still stand,
Our fathers fled beyond the sea,	The sacred pillars of our trust;
Their care was first to honor God,	And freedom's sons shall fill the land
And next to leave their children free.	When we are sleeping in the dust.
Above the forest's gloomy shade	Before thine altar, Lord, we bend,
The altar and the school appeared:	With grateful song and fervent prayer;
On that, the gifts of faith were laid;	For thou, who wast our fathers' friend,
In this, their precious hopes were reared.	Wilt make our offspring still thy care.

# QUINCY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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VIII. HISTORICAL ADDRESS, *Charles Francis Adams, Esq.*

IX. HYMN, *Old Hundred.*

From all that dwell below the skies,	Eternal are thy mercies, Lord;
Let the Creator's praise arise;	Eternal truth attends thy word;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung	Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
Through every land, by every tongue.	Till suns shall rise and set no more.

X. BENEDICTION, *Rev. Ellery Channing Butler.*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS

3 P.M., SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1908.









FIRST CHURCH EDIFICE FROM SITE OF JOHN QUINCY MONUMENT

## THE COMMEMORATIVE EXERCISES.

On the day following the anniversary of the birth of Washington, Sunday, February 23, the exercises in commemoration of Colonel John Quincy were celebrated in the commodious house of worship of the ancient First Church of Christ, with which society that personage was closely connected throughout his career. The edifice was well filled at the hour appointed, three o'clock in the afternoon, by residents of Quincy and by many from neighboring towns. The invited guests included the present mayor of the city, the Hon. William T. Shea, and all his predecessors in that office, every one of them, from the first incumbent, Col. Charles H. Porter, happily still living. There were also invited the selectmen of the towns which, with Quincy, formed the original township of Braintree, the wide-spread community so long represented by Colonel Quincy: Randolph, Holbrook, and the part still distinctively known as Braintree. The Historical Society of the adjoining town of Weymouth responded with a generous delegation of its members to the invitation sent them; as did the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Dames, the Adams Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution, and similar organizations. The direct descendants of Colonel John Quincy, and their connections in the Adams and Quincy and other families, were well represented. His Honor, the Mayor, unable to attend, sent a letter of regrets, but

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the President of the Council, Ralph W. Hobbs, and other members of the city government were present.

After the organ voluntary by the organist, Miss Alice B. Haskell, appropriate passages of Scripture were read by the pastor of First Church, the Rev. Ellery Channing Butler. Among these selections were the following:—

“Let us call to remembrance the great and the good through whom the Lord hath wrought glory and honor; such as were leaders of the people, men renowned for power, for counsel, for understanding and foresight; wise and eloquent in their teachings, and by their knowledge made fit helpers of their fellow-men.

“They were honored in their generations, and were the glory of their times.

“And though some have left no memorial behind them, yet their righteousness is not lost, and the blessed results of their goodness cannot be blotted out. Their bodies are buried in peace; but their work lives on forever.

“The people will tell of their wisdom, and after-times will show forth their praise. For the memorial of virtue is immortal, because it is known with God and with men. When it is present, men take example of it; and when it is gone, they earnestly desire it. It weareth a crown forever, having gotten the victory, striving for undefiled rewards.”

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### PRAYER BY THE REV. EDWIN N. HARDY, PH.D.

Almighty God, our heavenly Parent, we thy children love and revere thee, God of our fathers. Thou art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and in thee we live, move, and have our being. The heavens declare thy glory, and the firmament sheweth thy handiwork. All that is has come forth from thee, and all things are upheld and energized by thee. Thy beneficent purpose shapes and controls all things. Thou hast created man but a little lower than the angels, and thou madest him to have dominion over all the works of thy hands. We thank thee that thou hast given unto man the privilege of sharing with thee the advancement of the kingdom of righteousness, and we recognize with gratitude our indebtedness not only to thee, but to those who have lived before us. In the present we enjoy the rich heritage of the past, and would not be unmindful of our obligations to those who, through sacrifice, heroism, and devotion, made possible our larger life. We thank thee for the stimulating and enriching influences which ever flow from great and noble lives. We thank thee for the great leaders of men, the makers and moulders of public opinion, the champions of righteousness who have lived and wrought here in other days. Help us to keep green in memory these noble men and women, that we may perpetuate their deeds and emulate their virtues. We praise thee for our homes, schools, churches, and free

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institutions, and would not forget those who founded them and made them possible. Enable us, we entreat thee, to link the best things of the past to the present that we may be strengthened to meet our responsibilities, obligations, and opportunities with such noble purpose, consecrated energy, and sane insight that righteousness may everywhere prevail and thy kingdom speedily come. Give to this generation a correct vision of the past, that we may intelligently discern the sign of the present times, and so live and act that those who follow us may have occasion for rejoicing. Grant us a true and large vision of the future, and enable us to make real our best ideals.

Bless this ancient church and its pastor and all who here minister in thy name. Bless all our churches and free institutions, and especially this organization under whose auspices we to-day meet. Bless the city and make it worthy of the great and valuable heritage of the past, and may it ever hold in loving remembrance its noble benefactors, and, stimulated by the past, may it wisely build in the present for the welfare of the future.

We ask all these favors in the name of the Christ, the revealer of thy love and wisdom and the interpreter of life. Amen.

The hymn, written by Ralph Waldo Emerson, was announced by the pastor. The entire congregation joined in the singing, led by the choir of First Church, consisting of the following-named persons: Miss Marion Spinney, Mrs. Philip Hayes, Mr. William A. Sweet, and Mr. C. Pol Plançon.



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY  
BROOKS ADAMS.

*My Fellow-citizens of Quincy*,—You know that we meet to honor him for whom our town is named. Of John Quincy I shall say nothing. That task is committed to abler hands than mine. But it may not be unbecoming in me to draw your attention to one aspect of this ceremony which, I apprehend, is of moment to us all.

When just entering on old age, John Quincy's great-grandson, John Quincy Adams, thus communed with himself, as he one day wrote in his diary: "Democracy has no forefathers, it looks to no posterity. It is swallowed up in the present, and thinks of nothing but itself. This is the vice of democracy, and it is incurable. Democracy has no monuments. It strikes no medals. It bears the head of no man upon a coin. Its very essence is iconoclastic."

Since my grandfather thus philosophized, three-quarters of a century have elapsed, and, if we modern democrats have lost something of the elastic confidence of youth, we have at least learned something of due reverence for age. We strive to save our famous buildings, we sometimes erect tablets to the dead, we begin to honor the past.

From the banishment of our pastor, John Wheelwright, downward, this town has contributed its share to those labors which have made our Commonwealth renowned;

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but among all our ancestors perhaps not one has deserved better at the hands of his posterity than John Quincy, of whom we know but little more than that he has left to us his name. At length this reproach is to be lifted from us. One of his descendants has raised to his memory the monument which we now dedicate, and to-day the story of his life shall be told. I have the honor to introduce to you the Rev. Daniel Munro Wilson.

ADDRESS BY THE  
REV. DANIEL MUNRO WILSON.

I need hardly say, Mr. President, and ladies and gentlemen, that it is with the deepest emotions I stand once more in this sacred place, and, stirred by the thoughts of the occasion, face so large a congregation of the residents of Quincy, and others, the guests of our Historical Society. The spirit of the time, as well as of the locality, seems to uplift us,—his spirit whom we delight to honor as the father of our country. Revived by yesterday's observances, may that spirit possess us all the more to-day, as we dwell upon the character and achievements of the eminent leader of men who is peculiarly our own.

Separated by exactly sixty years, the birthday of Washington, 1732, and the birthday of the town of Quincy, 1792, fall upon the same date in February; and for us who reside here, or who, residing elsewhere, have lived in this place and still retain loving recollections of it, the coincidence is auspicious, one pleasant to dwell upon. Indeed, so completely in harmony is it with the traditions of this community that it would seem to indicate deliberate purpose on the part of our fellow-townsmen, Governor Hancock, that he should thus, on the birthday of him who was then President of the young republic, have signed the act incorporating the town in which was the residence of its Vice-President. If so, it was only another among the fortunate happenings which seem, by a sort

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of moral gravitation, to be drawn to a locality in which there was an unusual concentration, not only of men and women of mark, but also of ideas around which a new world crystallized.

It is, moreover, to be noted that Washington's name was a household word among your forebears here to a greater degree and in a more intimate sense than fell to the lot of all save a very few of our New England towns. Indeed, the friendly relations which existed between him and the eminent persons of this community seem to have been extended to the degree of being almost a common possession. The inhabitants as a whole felt, in a way, included in that circle of leading patriots. It was their neighbor, John Adams, who in the Continental Congress of 1775 spoke the decisive word which, coming from Massachusetts, summoned Colonel Washington to the command of the Continental Army. And these two, Washington and Adams, were joined in the first Chief Magistracy, when at last this republic was launched on its appointed course. Their fellow-townsmen by birth, John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress, also held close relations, not only official, but social, with the Father of his Country. For was it not Hancock and his wife Dorothy, born Quincy, who welcomed General Washington to their Philadelphia home, and afterwards President Washington to their Boston mansion? Moreover, there was that other eminent neighbor and sturdy patriot, Josiah Quincy, who, from his seat at North Braintree, "The Farms," as that portion of Quincy now known as Wollaston was called, maintained a constant

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correspondence with Washington throughout the siege of Boston, and delighted in a friendship which, beginning then, was never broken. Nor can I refrain from reminding you of the fact that it was President Washington who first called John Quincy Adams into what proved a public career of more than half a century,—a fact the memory of which is cherished by his fellow-townpeople, although Mr. Adams during fifty years of his long life was so continuously absent from the beloved place of his birth as to seem hardly of it. I know not whether Washington ever trod on Quincy soil. To the invitations pressed upon him to visit friends here, he returned cordial assurance of his desire so to do, and tradition even affirms that he carried the wish into act. Be that as it may, none the less are we justified in saying that Washington also, in a certain, perhaps ideal, sense, is a tutelary of our city.

What, however, I would especially emphasize in this auspicious natal coincidence in our civic anniversary is the fortunate linking of the birth of a heroic figure with the birth of a New England town. The three prevailing forces in the development of this nation are thus in a way conspicuously united,—the fit leader, the self-reliant people, the town government. Of these, each has played an essential part in the advancement of liberty and a gradual development of our civic principles. Their united and close interaction made America. Not a town of Massachusetts, however insignificant, but was in itself a republic. There, to quote from the "Three Episodes," was "bred the essence, moral and social, of a civilization



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instinct with stubborn independence and self-reliance." So, whenever here or elsewhere, the born leader arose, he found aligned with him a host of followers, kindred spirits, daringly responsive to his high appeals. So, too, when the people passionately aspired to the attainment of their civic ideals or the maintenance of their political rights, the able man, never lacking, stepped forth from among them, and then, in the old Teutonic fashion, lifted high on the shield of their confidence, he voiced their demands or led, foremost of all, their battle front. In the mother land and at a later day Carlyle labored vainly with forceful eloquence to evoke some leader from the ranks of a titled aristocracy to bring the "hordes of outcast, captainless," want-stricken wretches "under due captaincy," the one wise man "to take command of the innumerable foolish." Our deliverance was wrought in another way. The self-reliant, self-respecting men of the town meeting,—tillers of the soil and fishers of the sea,—whenever the issue was fairly joined and their rights invaded, saved themselves. So, "fearing God and knowing no other fear," they voted with "obscure" Sam Adams in Faneuil Hall, and stood with Captain John Parker, their farmer neighbor, on the green before the Lexington meeting-house. Beyond any other instance in history we can now recall, people and leaders were, in New England, all hewn from the same block. At the breaking out of the Revolutionary troubles, John Adams looked anxiously around among the patriots for those qualified to lead,—for the pre-eminent commanders of men. He found not one. "We have not men fit for

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the times," he lamented. "We are deficient in genius, in education, in travel, in fortune, in everything." Simply unconscious of his own powers, it never occurred to him to distinguish himself from his neighbors; and, falling back upon the conviction that the colonies would have to put up with such as they had, he, for his part, threw himself with entire devotion into the cause of liberty. Strong in a strength which redoubled at emergent demands, "he lifted the Continental Congress in his arms, and hurled it over the irrevocable line of independence." Then, and later as he fronted the Court of St. James in defence of the new nation, the provincial Massachusetts lawyer stood level with kings in the dignity and force of his manhood.

The leaders who in these United States, first and last, have thus, as occasion called, risen above their fellows, have not been few, nor is it too much to claim that they compare even more than favorably with the great of any other lands and ages. In this respect democracy, described by its detractors as a desert of mediocrities, has assuredly suffered no defeat. In statesmanship, it may be, we have yet to produce our Burke and Pitt with their philosophic depth of reflection and their splendor of oratory; but in every crisis which has arisen we have been favored with men fit for the occasion,—able men, men broadly intelligent and noble of purpose, rich in saving common sense, and, above all, endowed with wisdom born of high moral character. Them we love and venerate. They are part of a priceless heritage, a heritage which includes leaders in all lines of high human

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endeavor,—in literature, in law, in morals, in science, in art, in religion. That they created for us the plastic framework of a free constitution is much, for it stimulates the full expression of our individuality. But, above that even, America is incarnate in her great citizens, and, though long dead, they yet abide, a living power of lofty souls, thrilling us with ideal visions of freedom, with its deep moral obligation. Washington and Lincoln, Lowell, Emerson, and a thousand others, lift and inspire even when the sense of constitutional principles may fail. Ever a rebuke to all cheap and canting patriotism, they, in the words of Washington, “raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair.” The light from them falls upon us, and, as it descends, we also glow with a passion for truth, for justice, for God and our native land.

“We find in our dull road their shining track;  
In every nobler mood  
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,  
Part of our life’s unalterable good,  
Of all our saintlier aspiration.”

Here in New England, where the town meeting has been developed in its perfection, an unusually large proportion of distinguished Americans have been born. George William Curtis tells us that at the centennial anniversary of the surrender of Burgoyne, “Governor Horatio Seymour said to me that New England had done wisely in always carefully celebrating her great events and commemorating her great men. I could not,” he added, “help replying that New England was fortunate in pro-



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ducing great men, who naturally did great deeds worthy of commemoration.”

This, your city of Quincy, from the first settlement till now, has in that respect been signally favored, inasmuch as, from the beginning, not one generation has failed to furnish some eminent person, man or woman, who did notable deeds, or spoke timely words, measurably effective in shaping the destinies of the American people.

“From sire to son was stored the sacred seed,  
Age piled on age to meet a nation’s need.”

The memory of the most distinguished of these Quincy has not been forgetful to celebrate; but so numerous are her sons and daughters of more or less renown that enough of them have been forgotten, even here at home, to make famous, if judiciously distributed, several other communities. Colonel John Quincy, of Mt. Wollaston, is an instance. In his day he was one of the most trusted and influential public characters of the Province; but, for a hundred years or more, he has now been buried in oblivion. The present generation in Quincy hardly know that such a man ever existed. For example, I once mentioned John Quincy to a lifelong resident, a man of affairs and influence in the town. The response was: “John Quincy?—John Quincy?—I never heard of him before!” Another in the group then exclaimed: “Oh, yes, you have. We have all heard a great deal about John Quincy. You mean John Quincy Adams, don’t you?” That frank avowal of ignorance, and the responsive words which so darkened counsel, not unfairly ex-

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press what might be termed, in language none too strong, the reprehensible absence of all knowledge in this community of a representative man, who through a long life loyally devoted himself to the welfare of his town and the Province, and whom in that now remote period it was the delight of his fellow-citizens to honor. A very few especially interested in the annals of the town, like Edwin W. Marsh—the loss of whom still weighs heavily on us—knew a date or so, and retained the tradition of one or two events in John Quincy's life; but even to them he was little more than a name. To the rest he is "nameless in dark oblivion."

Nor, after all, is this oblivion, under the special circumstances of the case and when fairly considered, altogether occasion for special wonder. Not only did John Quincy die as far back as 1767, an old man, even then long retired from active participation in affairs, but he died on the very verge of a cataclysm, both political and social. The Stamp Act was passed in 1765. The duty on tea had been imposed by Act of Parliament of June 14, 1767, less than one month before John Quincy passed away. The following year saw the British regiments landed in Boston. The events of the quarter of the eighteenth century which then ensued, before Quincy was set off from Braintree, do not need to be referred to. Those years were replete with incident. During them the old order of things came to an end. With it those who played a part therein passed off the stage, and a generation which knew them not entered upon it. That such periods of rapid change should wipe out the memory

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of both men and traditions is in the nature of things. It was so in 1780. It was so again in 1870. The War of Secession, like the War of Independence, obliterated names and reputations and usages much as the flooding tide of an equinoctial gale obliterates footprints on the seashore. John Quincy's last recorded appearance at a Braintree town meeting was in September, 1758, probably a hundred and twenty years before the conversation to which I have referred took place; and the intervening century and a fifth witnessed two deluges. That under these circumstances the footprints of any but the most considerable of personages should have disappeared either from the sands of time or the memory of Quincy people, is not unnatural.

But at last, some fifteen years ago, a gleam of light was projected back into the darkness. In the pages of the "Three Episodes" the mental and moral stature of John Quincy loomed vaguely up, the extent of his public services grew dimly visible. The ground for John Adams's statement that in his day Colonel John Quincy "was as much esteemed as any man in the Province" began to become apparent. Yet little enough light was then or, for that matter, is even now available. The reason is made obvious by the statement "that not a letter or paper of his, or even a book known to belong to him, now remains in the possession of his descendants." In some house-cleaning cataclysm subsequent to his death all was swept away,—letters innumerable, multitudinous public documents, account books, journals not a few, a diary perhaps,—all vanished in an age incurious. For

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any possible biographer in a succeeding age next to nothing was left. And so it has come about that of John Quincy, second to none in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in his generation, "nothing now remains except a name and a few dates." His case resembles closely one lately made public concerning that English Earl of Leicester, the friend of America during the Revolutionary period. It was he who moved in Parliament that American independence be recognized, and his name was a household word in both continents. But the materials for his biography became strangely lost; and thus he, too, passed from world-wide fame to complete oblivion. Patriotic services, though treasured in a few grateful minds, are remembered no more when those minds cease to work. Even tradition fades away. The printed record alone remains. That outlasts the very granite of your hills.

Our all-but-forgotten worthy, Colonel John Quincy, of Mt. Wollaston, he who for three or more generations has lingered a mere shadow in the minds of the best-informed in this community, and who is hardly more than a name on the meagre pages of its annals, is none the less the civic father of your city. To use a learned word, he is your eponym, your name ancestor. Most so-called eponymous heroes—those whose names glorify clan, tribe or city—are mythical. They belong to the Romulus and Remus type, and John Quincy, certainly, has not escaped this phase of legendary obscurity. There was doubt even about the day of his birth,—yes, and the place of it,—till Mr. Adams, through his researches







JOHN QUINCY MONUMENT

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brought the recorded facts to light and set them down in his "Three Episodes," that work of love, let me interject here, and not least among his gifts to the people of Quincy. Indeed, no one in this generation knew where John Quincy was buried till, after several vain efforts to find the spot, I was rewarded by stumbling, one day in 1903, upon a fragment of a tombstone which marked his place of interment in the old burying-ground. It has since been made conspicuous by the erection of a memorial stone by the Quincy Historical Society, under whose auspices these services are held. To men now living, John Quincy himself may be unknown; but the generation succeeding his exalted itself and him by giving the name of Quincy to the North Precinct of Braintree, when at last, by the Act of February 22, 1792, it was set off as a separate town.

It is a fair inference from the proceedings which marked the naming of the town then called into existence, that a generation after his death John Quincy, in the esteem of his townsman, rivalled John Hancock, son of Braintree though he was, and, as chief executive of the Commonwealth, at the crowning period of his fame and popularity. When, after much contention with the South Precinct, the new town was about to be incorporated, the minister of the North Precinct Church, the Rev. Anthony Wibird, was requested to propose a name. This was the old-fashioned deference to the cloth, but that "inanimate old bachelor," as Abigail Adams had designated him, somewhat irreverently, twenty years before, manifestly not equal to the occasion, timidly shirked the responsi-

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bility. Possibly it was a case of the embarrassment of riches. Having so many famous men born into his parish, how was he to discriminate among them? So the proposition was passed on to the Hon. Richard Cranch. His response was,—“Call it Quincy, in honor of John Quincy!”

Later a number of aggressively independent citizens wondered if in this matter they had been sufficiently considered. Was this, indeed, their choice? Might not Richard Cranch and many of the other elders be unduly attached to the memory of John Quincy?

“Some to the fascination of a name  
Surrender judgment hoodwinked.”

Why not honor a living man—one with a name as widely known? Such was John Hancock, governor at the time, the first Governor of Massachusetts as a community of Freemen. Let that fact not be forgotten. Then at the summit of his popularity, John Hancock had signed the act incorporating Quincy; and the affixing his name to it must have renewed in his mind, and in the minds of others, thoughts of his own intimate relations with the ancient town in which he was born, and from which he had taken to wife Dorothy Quincy. So a town meeting was called for May 14, 1792, at which the opposition name was proposed,—Hancock, a name to conjure with. The records show that the discussion which ensued was long and exciting,—at times, as one may guess, electric even. With two such names to choose between, great must have been the stimulus to



town-meeting eloquence. Speak them, they may sound equally well to him in whose heart the familiar syllables of the one have not become as music. I frankly confess, as a judge in that controversy I am incapacitated. Either name, however, is nobly suggestive. At the close of the debate the motion to petition the legislature for an alteration of name was defeated. The original appellation was thus confirmed.

Nearly four generations of those here born and here dying have since passed on; and, were this community once more called upon now, as in May of 1792, to confirm the name, it may confidently be asserted that its action would be unanimous. The title itself, has it not a distinctive character, and is it not pleasant to the ear? and our name ancestor, the more he is scrutinized, is he not the more exalted? Quincy, in truth, seems the one name congenial to the spirit and history of this locality. Deep-rooted in chivalrous Norman life, transplanted here with the first settlers, associated with so much that is fine and high in those who bore it, and in utterance full and dignified, it tastes of the soil: it seems almost the natural product of environment, and not a title fixed by formal vote. Honored at home, abroad revered, it is a distinction to be called of Quincy. Indeed, some occult but prophetic fate appears to have intervened to stamp that name upon this place; for in a map published in England in 1775, seventeen years before the town was incorporated, the one word "Quinzey," and that word alone, covers the territory included within your municipal bounds.

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Braintree,—old “Brantry,” written in the town records as it was pronounced,—has, nevertheless, not faded from the memory of those of Quincy whose ancestors planted it here. Anglo-Saxon in its origin, the name Braintree links this American home with that England whence our fathers came. Still, the word Quincy throbs with a personal element. It carries us back to him and to those others who so long and honorably bore it, and whose virtues, we trust, as well as the name, have become “part of our life’s unalterable good.” What a power of enchantment the sound of it exercises over us at times, holding us in meditation upon the past we ourselves have known!—the lingering village life, almost ideal in its New England quaintness and culture, the homes of the dear and the intimate, the loved faces and forms long since vanished. Like a lamp, it lights that sacred past, and by its beams flung forward we seem to discern that larger city of the future which shall not unworthily fulfil the promise of its origin.

It is, perhaps, a trifle disconcerting that John Quincy should not have been a native of the place which is honored by his name. It had long been conceived, and even stated by one of the earlier town historians, that he was born in the North Precinct of Braintree, on the estate originally granted to his ancestors. But it so chanced that he was really born in Boston; for in the records of that city we read, under the date 1689, the following: “John of Daniel and Anna Quinsie born July 21.” This event had followed apparently soon upon the removal of his parents to the principal town of

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Massachusetts Bay, where the father entered upon the business of gold and silver smith, the nearest approach to a banker known to those days. We may, however, rest assured that the Boston-born John Quincy belonged indubitably to the stock identified from the beginning with our community. His father, Daniel Quincy, first drew breath in the old Quincy homestead, still standing. The parents of Daniel were Colonel Edmund Quincy, who with his first wife, Joanna Hoar, began their house-keeping in that same homestead immediately upon their marriage. Husband and wife both were notable persons; for Joanna was the daughter of another Joanna, the widow of Sheriff Hoar, of Gloucester, England. When her husband died, this elder Joanna emigrated to these shores with her five children, and settled in a home not far from where the present edifice of the original First Church now stands. Her last resting-place is in the old burying-ground, where, on a monument which marks the site, the virtues of "a Great Mother" are extolled in rude verse. She was distinguished then; she has become more distinguished since as "the common origin of an offspring at once numerous and notable." Besides the direct male line which issued in Senator Hoar and his brother Judge E. Rockwood Hoar, lines not less famous under other names have inherited, apparently, distinctive traits of a character nobly dominant.

Such through his father Daniel (and nothing is here said of the Quincy line itself up to Edmund, the immigrant) was the ancestry of John Quincy. Were his ancestry traced on his mother's side, it would be found

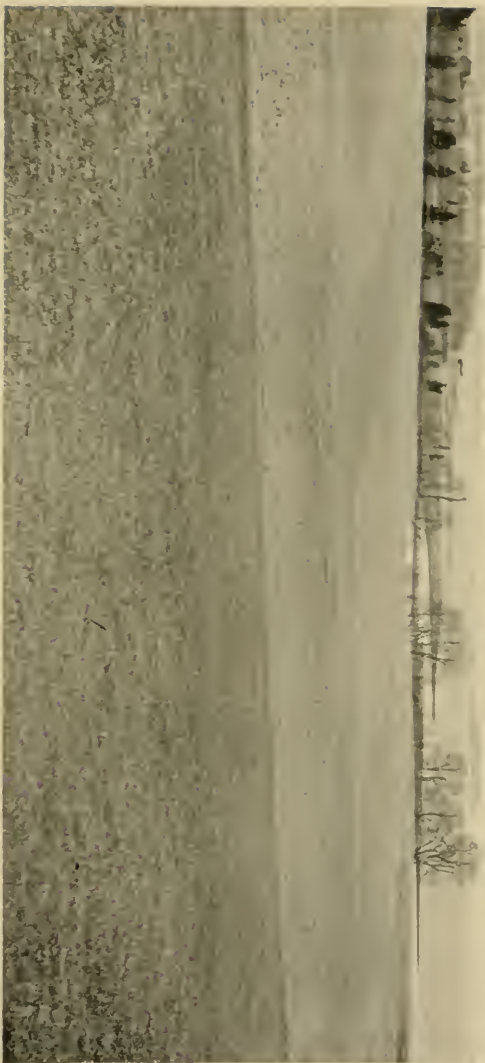
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hardly less distinguished, for she was daughter of the Rev. Thomas Shepard, of Cambridge. I cannot pause to give even a meagre list of the worthies this connection includes, but it is especially interesting to us to know that the wife of the Rev. Mr. Shepard was the daughter of Captain W. Tyng, Boston's richest merchant in that day, and the purchaser of Mt. Wollaston and other lands of the exile William Coddington. It was this purchase which eventually attracted John Quincy to Braintree; for, when his grandmother Shepard died, in 1709, he inherited Mt. Wollaston.

Early possession of the broad acres of Mt. Wollaston, or Merry Mount, fruitful in themselves and beautiful for situation, together with an ancestry fairly high in social life, afforded in those days, more than now would be the case, vantage-ground of no slight potency from which to front the world. A merely ordinary man, so favored, not infrequently then commanded office and a degree of influence. But John Quincy, from the outset, developed power. He moved easily from one position to another, as though "half his strength he put not forth," until at last, before attaining more than middle life, he had served in about all the public offices to which a provincial might aspire. Everything he did seems to have been handsomely done. As one observes him through his career, the thought will suggest itself that, on a wider field and under the stimulus of stronger forces, the response aroused in him would have been conspicuous, perhaps historic.

"The narrow circle narrows, too, the mind,  
And man grows greater as his ends are great."



SEAWARD VIEW FROM MOUNT WOLLASTON





## JOHN QUINCY

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"He belonged to the class," writes the present C. F. Adams, "which in England produced John Hampden,—the educated country gentlemen, the owners of the broad acres on which they dwelt. Following no profession, but going up to Parliament year after year, they were the loyal, ingrained representatives of the communities of which they were a part. Of these men, Washington was a Virginia offshoot. He represented them in their highest phase of development under Southern surroundings,—plain, true, straightforward, self-respecting, gifted with that perfectly balanced common-sense which in its way is a sort of genius. Favorable circumstances, always availed of, brought Washington to the front, and have made of him an American immortality. Yet in America, at that time, as in the Stoke-Poges churchyard, there were, doubtless, many men who contained within themselves the possibilities of a Hampden, a Milton, or a Cromwell. That John Quincy contained those elements cannot be asserted," concludes Mr. Adams, "for of him nothing now remains except a name and a few dates." Even when we include such facts as may have been brought to light since Mr. Adams wrote these words, reflecting the personality of John Quincy, little enough truly abides. But from the things done in his day, when he was the chief figure in the legislature; from the measures which promoted the rights of the Provinces, we may not unsafely infer that here was a masterful leader, one to be counted among the men of distinct mark in the Province. It was he and men of his type who created and fostered the conditions which favored in later days the growth of the tree

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of liberty. One is tempted to say, "No John Quincy and his compatriots, then no James Otis, and no Sam Adams; no Lexington, Concord or Bunker Hill." Be it always borne in mind that subsequent revolutions called glorious are virtually fought out in the undramatic and forgotten days before the far-flung battle line claims the final, the supreme sacrifice. The spirit which resisted the Stamp Act, and which blazed out in a flame of fire in 1775, was alight and glimmered steadily through the long years which saw the inflexible safeguarding of provincial privilege by men of the John Quincy type.

So far as it can be discerned, it is well, therefore, to trace the growth and career of this stanch provincial patriot "insistent for freedom." His father, Daniel Quincy, died when John, his only son, was hardly more than a year old. A daughter, Anna, had been born some time before; but where the widow, with her two children, now made her home, we have no means of knowing. Not improbably she went back to her mother in Cambridge. Later she may have gone to Braintree at the solicitation of her husband's kindred, to be housekeeper to the Rev. Moses Fiske, the second settled minister of this First Church. His wife had died in 1692 after bearing him fourteen children. A housekeeper, past doubt, was a crying need. At all events, she and the minister were married in the tenth year of her widowhood; and the marriage took place in Braintree, which bears out the supposition that Mrs. Quincy was a resident of that town. The record of it is as follows: "The Rev.



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Moses Fiske, & Mrs. Anna Quinsey were married ye 7th January 1700 by Saml Sewall Esqr."

This, then, is probably the date at which John Quincy, now eleven years old, became earliest identified with the town which subsequently he served through a long life. With the introduction there could have gone little that was exhilarating. In the piously ordered home of the minister John Quincy was numbered with the four boys and two or three girls who remained of the fourteen children born of one mother in less than twenty years. Mistress Anna Quincy-Fiske added two more, and the house of the minister was small. The property of Charles H. Spear, it is still to be seen on Franklin Street, and it is otherwise celebrated for the "highly respectable school kept in it for many years by Mr. Joseph Marsh, in which John Adams and Josiah Quincy, Jr., were prepared for college." To exchange this home for Harvard College could surely have been no small relief to the young John Quincy. He entered the college about three years after his mother's marriage, and was graduated in 1708. The same year, on July 24, his mother died. Thus in a measure cast loose from Braintree, he might well have settled with the Shepards, his mother's people, in Cambridge; but, at this critical moment, the cast of fortune decided him to remain in his father's native town, for the next year, 1709, he fell heir to Mt. Wollaston. Soon he went to live there, his older sister going with him, perhaps; for a letter written in 1712, by Edmund Quincy, speaks of "John a man grown and living in our town." It is in the same year that a pew is built for him

in the meeting-house. By this time, or a little later, he must have erected the dwelling of Colonial type in which he continued to live until his death. Afterwards occupied by his son Norton, it stood on the Hough's Neck and Germantown road till 1852. Marriage followed in 1715, when Elizabeth Norton, daughter of the Rev. John Norton, third pastor of the old church in Hingham, became his wife. The date of Colonel Quincy's marriage I have not been able to ascertain, but there is on record, in Hingham, the following notice of the publication of the banns: "Col. John Quincy of Braintree and Elizabeth Norton of Hingham int of Marriage Sept. 3d 1715"; and this, "Elizabeth Norton Pub. Sep 3d 1715 Col John Quincy of Braintree." As was then the custom, the marriage probably took place two or three days after the notices were published. On Tuesday, October 4, of that year, Judge Sewall records that he gave John Quincy a "Psalm-book covered with Turkey-Leather for his Mistress."

As early as his twenty-sixth year, we thus see, John Quincy is called "colonel,"—a first dignity conferred apparently by popular brevet, for, actually, he ranked only as major in that Suffolk regiment of which his uncle, Edmund Quincy, was lieutenant-colonel. But the early bestowal of the grade of major was highly complimentary, and meant social distinction and political advancement, as was illustrated in the case of John Hull, the thriving Boston merchant, who, chosen corporal in the same regiment, praised God "for giving him acceptance and favor in the eyes of the people, and as a fruit thereof



LINDENS PLANTED BY JOHN QUINCY TO  
FRONT HIS HOME



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advancement above his deserts." In the case of Major John Quincy promotion in other lines followed rapidly; and on Aug. 3, 1716, "The inhabitants of Braintree regularly assembled then chose Major John Quincy moderator for that day." Already he was treading in the footsteps of his uncle, eminent in many lines and later called "the judge." For eleven years "the judge" had been moderator and representative; but the nephew was now to surpass him, and all others of his name, in length of public service. Early appointed a justice of the peace, he was next commissioned as special justice; then a justice of the quorum; and, finally, a justice through the Province. In 1717, a year after he was first chosen moderator, he was elected to represent Braintree in the General Court. Again elected in 1719, his fellow-citizens having now had an opportunity to judge of his quality, he was launched on his unparalleled career both as permanent representative and as moderator. For twenty-one successive years—that is, from 1719 to 1740—he was returned to the House of Representatives with unfailing regularity; and during even a longer period he was chosen moderator of town meetings with almost equal regularity. Still higher honors were accorded to him. His personality, his character and judgment, and his sturdy provincial patriotism so impressed his fellow-representatives that they elected him speaker of the House from 1727 to 1741, a period of fourteen years. A tribute from town and Province which stamps him as no common man.

The selection of a member of the Great and General Court to the important position of speaker was then no

mere matter of compliment. The representatives of the Province of Massachusetts Bay had a battle to fight. Their ancient chartered liberties, their rights as freemen, were at stake. They required in their speaker a sagacious, an intrepid, and a masterful leader. Their spokesman had to be a representative New England man,—one of a people among whom “a fierce spirit of liberty had sprung up.” It may, therefore, safely be assumed that John Quincy presided with firmness and dignity, that he had those qualities which Richard H. Dana said were sought for in the speaker of the House of Commons,—a man recognized by common consent as a gentleman, “and of such manners and sentiments that on any question of decorum or of personal rights or obligation in the House his word would be law.” That is much, and may suffice to distinguish a man as speaker in the routine of ordinary times; but such qualities alone did not raise a man to the level of the exigencies of that turbulent period of which Governor Thomas Hutchinson, in his contemporary history, declared that more perilous contentions and confusions had not existed since the Antinomian Controversy, when Sir Harry Vane was defeated and abandoned the Colony, and our townsmen, Wheelwright and Coddington, were driven into exile. Hot with smouldering passions, the atmosphere threatened at any moment to blaze into fire. On the floor of the legislature the contest for human rights was being fought out.

The colonial charter and the system which it expressed had now become a thing of the long past, but the colo-



nists, though inhabitants of a Province, as it was called, continued to regard their relations to the mother country as those prescribed in the charter of King Charles; and, if their "rights as Englishmen" were obstructed, they, in strict accordance with British constitutional theories, attributed their wrongs to over-zealous exercise of the king's prerogative by Tory placemen. As a matter of fact, however, through a century of self-reliant town government, the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay had grown beyond that stage in which subordination to a distant authority, disposed to exploit them for its own benefit, was longer tolerable. They felt competent to govern themselves. The royal governors with their power of veto were an intrusion. The English Board of Trade, with its monopolistic navigation and trade laws, hampered natural development. The situation was thus prolific of misunderstandings. The documents of that forgotten time reveal royal governors genuinely astonished, as they found themselves baffled by what they regarded as the stubborn contentiousness of the colonists. On the other hand, these last were in a state of constant indignation and resentment over what they considered unwarrantable invasions of rights and privileges. Altogether, the crisis was one which called for a clear-minded and well-balanced mediator and leader; and such John Quincy proved. As a contemporary wrote, the speaker "had a high sense of his accountableness to the Supreme Governor of the world for the trusts imposed in him, and studiously avoided an ensnaring dependency on any man, and whatever that should tend to lay him

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under any disadvantage in the discharge of his duty." Thus furnished, John Quincy responded fully to the exigencies of the hour. With an open mind, he appreciated the right intentions of the royal governors when they acted within the terms of their instructions. He saw what we in the clear light of this day now see,—that their faults were mainly due to "unconscious ignorance and not conscious malice." This explains why not one of the governors who came and went while he was speaker vetoed his election. Indeed, on one occasion when the House, carried off its feet by a paper money delusion, undertook to elect another man its speaker, Governor Belcher would not be content till Colonel Quincy was put back in his old place. At the same time, unaffected by the geniality of a provincial court life, with its "far-off splendors of the throne," he remained the strong, simple New England man, "ever approving himself," to quote once more our contemporary writer, "a true friend to the interest and the prosperity of the province, a zealous advocate for, and vigorous defender of, its liberties and privileges."

From the very year that John Quincy entered upon his duties as speaker, the conflict between the crown and the colonies deepened. The king and his council then began the ominous work of strengthening their colonial policy; and, as Hutchinson observes, the House on its side discovered a disposition to "amplify their jurisdiction." The ultimate dispute was over the granting of a fixed salary to the governors during the years of their administration. To us the issue bears a trivial, a sordid



aspect; but, in fact, the money consideration was of comparatively little moment. The representatives were convinced that, if they voted a salary fixed in amount and for a certain time, the governor would be independent of them, and look solely to England for instructions and support. He would be encouraged to regard them as a dependent people, and to appoint judges, customs officers, justices of the peace, and other officials with the one thought of their loyalty. So, from time to time, the House voted sums of money for the use of the governor, omitting, however, all mention of salary or term of grants; and the sums thus voted were significantly proportional to the good will evinced by the governor, or the hope of that good will. The representatives of His Majesty were needy, but they hardly dared accept money thus doled out. Their instructions forbade them, "it being absolutely necessary," as the Lords in Council declared, "for your Majesty's service that the independence of the Governor upon the assembly should be preserved," and of the utmost importance to resist the power contended for by the Massachusetts legislature "to bring the governor appointed by your Majesty over them into a dependency on their good will for his subsistence, which would manifestly tend to a lessening of his authority, and consequently of that dependence which this colony ought to have upon the crown of Great Britain, by bringing the whole legislative power into the hands of the people." Governors appointed because of their supposed strength of will met wills no less inflexible than their own. About the time that Colonel Quincy assumed the duties of

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speakership, Governor Burnet began his administration. Hutchinson describes him as a person not "easily moved from a resolution he had once taken up." No sooner had Burnet begun his activities than "the House now thought themselves obliged to be more particular than they had been fully to assert their rights." Within a year or so he passed away, his death hastened, as Hutchinson insinuates, by the effect of the controversy upon his spirits. "He did not know the temper of the New England people. They have a strong sense of liberty and are more easily drawn than driven." Of his successor, Governor Belcher, there was but one question asked by the appointing power,—Would he be able "to influence the people to a compliance with the king's instructions"? He came to proffer one more opportunity of paying due regard to the royal wisdom, "the last signification of our royal pleasure to them upon this subject." Belcher first appealed to the House, and then tried to dragoon it; but it would not yield an inch. In utter despair he petitioned the home government for a relaxation of its instructions, and for permission to receive for a year or two the grants of money on the legislature's own terms. And thus the matter rested until the whirlwind of the Revolution brought about a new alignment of the antagonistic forces.

From the moment in which he first seated himself in the speaker's chair, his office brought Colonel Quincy face to face with the royal governors. He it was who so often led the members of the House when they marched from their own chamber in the old State House to wait

upon his Excellency in his council chamber. He it was who, conspicuously advanced, voiced a people's aspirations, and presented their sturdy rejection of measures. He it was who, in the forefront, received not only His Majesty's instructions from the representative of royalty, but also his threatenings. "I must tell you," Governor Belcher declared on one of these occasions, "that it is with the greatest surprise and concern to me that you seem so willing at present to run Hazard of the fatal consequences which your proceedings (in my opinion) will certainly produce, and which you and your posterity will groan under when it may be too late to find redress." In response, Speaker Quincy calmly requests that the governor's words be given him in writing, to insure fair consideration. The members then ceremoniously return to their own assembly room, and on this, or some other occasion, answer, that "by refusing to disburse moneys for defence as the House desired, his Excellency put them in the deplorable dilemma either to part with their ancient liberties and usages, . . . or to lie in this exposed condition. This is truly shocking."

That campaign was ceaselessly continued throughout John Quincy's speakership. "To one who really knew," writes J. A. Doyle, "what political forces were at work beneath the surface it might well seem the little cloud like a man's hand, which held stored within it the whole storm of Revolution." The same principles were involved. All that James Otis and Sam Adams claimed in the next generation was now insisted upon in the face of governors especially appointed to exact submission.

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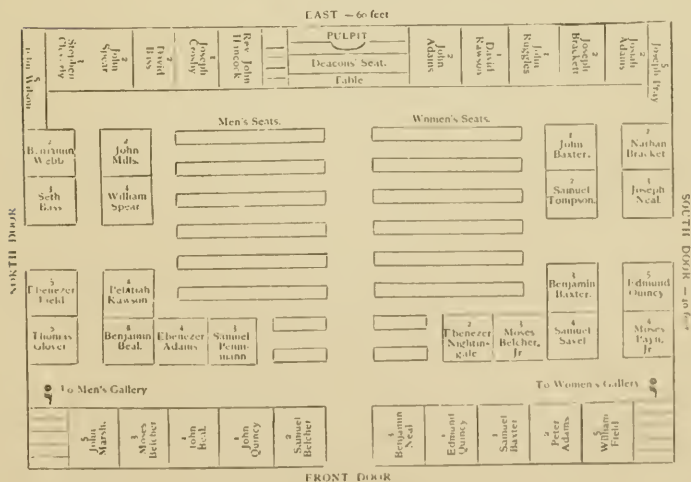
If another element were needed to increase the strain and stress of that period, it was furnished in full measure by the unsettling influence of the great earthquake. This occurred during the very year in which John Quincy was elected speaker; and, with the heaving and trembling of the solid earth, all things seemed unstable. The superstition of the age accepted the phenomenon as the warning of an angry God, and countless were the inferences drawn from it. Manifestly, the times were out of joint. Any reverse, any visitation, might be expected. This state of feeling drew on the "Great Awakening," with Jonathan Edwards for its relentless interpreter and prophet. It was during the long speakership of Colonel Quincy that the wild commotion of this unparalleled religious revival reached its climax, and passed away. While it lasted, it swept into its streaming extravagances things political, financial, social. There was hardly a line of thought or action it did not deflect from its usual and rational course. We can easily believe that under these circumstances the most self-contained and far-seeing men only could maintain the direct forthright, and continue trustworthy guides.

Not on the wide waters of world-politics, not so completely as Pitt, was John Quincy "the pilot who weathered the storm;" but this, at least, can be said of him,—that no man of his time surpassed him in compelling sagacity of moral judgment, or in solid integrity of character. Like others of his name and kindred, he revealed a generous competency in the performance of whatever public duties were intrusted to him. A Marblehead





OLD (HANCOCK) MEETING-HOUSE



Ground Floor, when dedicated in 1732





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skipper, who was placed in charge of an ocean liner, was asked if he did not feel a bit put to it to sail so great a craft. "No, sir," was the reply, "a Marblehead Captain is always bigger than his ship." So of our Quincy worthies, whether elected to govern town meetings, or to shape the measure of state assemblies; whether chosen to contend with kings, to administer this republic, to arbitrate questions dividing great nations, they always approved themselves level with the appointed task.

Such was the effective energy of John Quincy that it not only compassed the admirable performance of the speaker's duties, but sufficed for arduous labors on most of the important committees ordered in his day. A committee, for instance, was appointed to reduce into some sort of system the chaos of a fluctuating currency. He was its chairman; and the problem which confronted him was indeed a difficult one,—to fix a standard of value in the absence of silver and gold, during a time when old tenor bills and new tenor bills were sliding up and down,—though most generally down,—while bargaining was yet in process. In such high estimation was Colonel Quincy's judgment in financial matters held that his own town, in its particular perplexities, never failed to claim his assistance. He was also chairman of the legislative committee charged with the draughting of instructions for the agent of the Province at the court of Great Britain. He was on military committees, as befitted one who held the rank of colonel. He was called upon to see to the repairs on Castle William when war with Spain was declared. He was commissioned to allay the threatened

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tumult of the land bankers. So, not unnaturally, his contemporaries take pains to record his "constant application in the despatch of public business"; nor did the House fail to vote that "there be paid four shillings per diem to the Hon. John Quincy, Speaker of the House, for every day of his attendance." When ill, it is to be presumed, he would be required to live on his private means. An item in the House Journal indicated one such absence from illness on his part, and at the same time affords incidentally an illuminating glimpse of that "insolence of office" to which the House was now and then subjected. At the opening of the session in 1739 the following is set down: "Inasmuch as this House have been informed that the Hon. John Quincy, Esq., their Speaker, is so indisposed that he can't conveniently attend the public service, Therefore voted that Nathaniel Cunningham, Mr. James Allen, and Mr. Thomas Rowell, be a committee to repair to the Speaker's lodgings and make Inquiry as to the State of his Health, that so the House may properly proceed to the choice of another Speaker to take the chair in case he cannot attend." His illness was prohibitive of his attendance; so Ebenezer Pomroy was chosen speaker, and a committee was appointed to acquaint his Excellency, the Governor, "who returned they had been at His Excellency's Seat, and informed him by his servant they had a Message from the House of Representatives to deliver His Excellency, who sent them in answer, He received no Message out of the Chair. Upon which the Committee acquainted the Governor's Secretary with the subject-matter

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of the message, and urged the Necessity of delivering it: who quickly returned from the Governor, made answer that His Excellency did not care; he would receive no message out of his Chair." The speaker, let it be noted, was still ill when the House was prorogued in January.

Perhaps the most interesting among the lesser responsibilities of John Quincy was his care of the Ponkapoag Indians. That this duty should fall to him, and that he should fulfil it so conscientiously for over a score of years, bears testimony to his character. These Indians, the remnant of the tribe of the Massachusetts which once possessed the land about the Blue Hills, were being rapidly despoiled of the little left them. Their white neighbors were annexing their meadows, their orchards, and their timber. In their distress they petitioned the legislature of 1727 that "Major John Quincy, Esq., be fully empowered and authorized to look after us in all things." He was of Braintree, they on their reservation in Stoughton, separated from him by a dozen miles or so of rough country—a tramp even an Indian would not altogether fancy. But they had heard of his plain honesty and valued judgment, and Major John Quincy they would have. He accepted the trust; and, through all the twenty-one years of official relations, he dealt patiently with these wards of his "as under the strongest obligations to be faithful." Often, when the funds which were at his disposal were exhausted, he borrowed from his own pocket to meet needy circumstances. He was resolute from the beginning not to sell the Indians any strong drink. He did what he could to encourage them

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in their religious duties. He defeated the schemes of all those who would plunder them. In the long and woful chapter of our Indian spoliations it is a relief to come upon this record of just and humane supervision and guardianship.

Not until lately has it been given us to get an inside view of these most creditable relations. Hardly a single line of Colonel Quincy's with regard to them was known to be extant. Indeed, it was doubtful whether specimens of his handwriting in any form, (except an occasional signature) or on any subject had come down to this day. A continued research has, however, now been rewarded with the discovery of literally yards of his composition, hidden in that scrap-bag of the past known as the Massachusetts State Archives. Mainly concerned with the Ponkapoag trust, in this treasure-trove are two long reports of expenditures of moneys committed to Colonel Quincy; also a convincing and luminous answer to a forged petition of those "men of Stoughton of no character" who were itching to exploit the Indians again. Finally, there also is his letter of resignation to Governor Shirley, written in 1747.

These reports are at least well calculated to excite sympathy with the toil undergone by the writer. I measured one, and found it to contain some five feet ten inches of wide, closely written pages. It is the careful, itemized account of a conscientious man. From pence to pounds, from corn to clothing, the items are put down with dates and names; while the names excite wonder that he had the patience to spell them. Amos Ahauton,



W. of the Hall  
Bay,

530.  
To His Excellency William  
Pitt Esq. Secretary of War  
in and over the said Province  
of the County of Hampshire  
and House of Representatives  
You are Obedt. Servant  
17th 1797

Memorial of John Quincy  
for the Indians of Punkapoags  
Humbly & faithfully

That your Honor's Hall for twenty one  
years past had the care of the said Indians Interest  
and the Management of their Affairs. Which  
Trust he has with considerable Labour & Pains  
discharged, to the Acceptance of the Hon. Court  
That Altho the Number of said Indians  
is diminished and the trouble in that affair  
in proportion. Yet several of the said  
who survive are aged & infirm and unable  
to come to your Honor's Hall by reason of  
their distance from him. He therefore thinks it will  
be most convenient for the said Indians that another person  
who dwells nearer to them be appointed for that  
purpose and that it is most advisable for him to sign  
the said Trust. And as your Honor's Hall in his hands  
disposes of about amounting to the sum of the hundred  
Twenty six pounds for the said Indians for the peace  
and the principal at interest for the use of  
the said Indians. He humbly prays your Excellency  
and Honors will be pleased to appoint some person  
to receive the said Money and to be trusted to the  
said Indians in his hand and that he may be  
discharged of the same. And your Honor's Hall  
as in Duty bound shall pray &c

John Quincy





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Mary Sycamugg, Hezekiah Squammogg, Abigail Quock, Robert Mummentaugh; one cannot but ask,—Did he really know them all, and call them all by their individual names? It seems not unlikely; for, certainly, he saw them often enough. Not a week seems to have gone by without its party of Indians striking the trail for Colonel Quincy's farm. He did not dare to give them much food at a time, for fear they would waste it; nor much money, for fear they would squander it on drink. The much-enduring guardian suffered for his carefulness. "From Ponkapog to Pesth" is to us a familiar phrase. In that day it might well have been inverted,—the pest from Ponkapoag! Yet from all that appears, no matter how frequent the visitation, both Colonel Quincy and his wife never failed to treat kindly the red men, their squaws, and their papooses. In one of those letters recently found, Colonel Quincy writes, "they have always had what was convenient of beer and cyder when they came to his house, which has been very often, without being charged anything therefor." In the fishing season they came to the shore near his home where they "camped for weeks, burning up his wood, and sometimes not sparing his fencing stuff, . . . for which there was not the least consideration made." When, at last, he resigns his trust, which he has "with considerable Labour and Pains Discharged to the Acceptance of this Hon'ble Court," he does so, not for his own ease, but because "several of the Indians who survive are aged and infirm and so unable to come to your Memorialist for supplies as formerly, by reason of their distance from him."

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We now come to a passage in the life of Colonel Quincy in which his career as a public man suffered sudden eclipse. He, too, was subjected to one of those tests which, soon or late, few political characters escape. In his case it set the seal on his patriotism and his courage,—it showed him one of that rare class of men long ago, and for all time, described by Horace,—

Justum et tenacem propositi virum  
Non civium ardor prava jubentium  
Mente quatit solida, . . .  
Si fractus illabatur orbis,  
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

Colonel Quincy, at the commencement of the session of 1740, had received all the votes cast for speaker, excepting one only,—the vote presumably deposited by himself; a unanimity of choice with which he had been honored almost every year since first he was summoned to the chair. At the next session his familiar form was not to be seen; nor did the name of the “Honorable John Quincy, Esq., of Braintree,” appear on the roll of the House. A premonition of the sweeping changes then wrought, like the far-drawn retreat of the waters from the ocean shore which marks the oncoming of a tidal wave, disturbed the previous session of 1739. At that time, “when the House of Representatives came together they chose the Honorable Paul Dudley, Esq., Speaker by a great majority of votes.” The governor, however, interposed with his prerogative, vetoing the choice. Then the House, docile to a degree, voted again, “when it

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appeared that the Honourable John Quincy, Esq., was chosen by a considerable majority of the votes."

What was the cause of this sudden withdrawal in the Great and General Court of confidence in the man who had been elected its speaker through fourteen successive years? Did he suffer from the suspicion that he deferred more to the royal governor and his placemen than was befitting? On this point the provincial representatives were extremely sensitive. A former speaker, Elisha Cooke, the younger, who was a staunch champion of provincial rights, fell under the swift censure of the Boston voters at the mere insinuation that he welcomed too eagerly the administration's favors. Or was it simply that Colonel Quincy was in his turn a victim of the craving for change, that notorious weakness of democracies?

The situation is made doubly perplexing by the action of his own neighbors, the voters of Braintree, in refusing, at the next election, to return him as their representative. What is the true explanation? A tradition has always prevailed hereabouts that the political commotion which wrought so complete and sudden an alteration in the career of John Quincy was caused by the intrigues of a certain Joseph Gooch, an exploiting politician,—a startling intrusion then of that disorganizing phenomenon which has now become so common a peril. This tradition, however, when closely scrutinized, melts away. It is not, in the first place, easy to believe that the voters of the Braintree of that period were so fickle that an upstart politician by his manipulations, however cunning,

could demoralize in a day the loyalty of years. To conceive this of the ages which we have regarded as simpler and truer than our own would be, to say the least, a severe wrench to the feelings. Furthermore, it so happens that, as a matter of fact, it was not Gooch who was preferred to Colonel Quincy on this occasion, but Captain William Hunt.

We are thus forced to look elsewhere for adequate interpretation. With a hint from the writings of Mr. Andrew McFarland Davis, who has searched deeply into several episodes of that distant day, we find the explanation not in a political flurry, nor primarily in a controversy with the king and his ministers, but in a most unlooked-for agitation,—a wildeat banking craze! In this day few have heard of that project for the issuance of cheap currency here in Massachusetts known as the Land Bank and Manufactory Company. Fewer still realize the wide commotion it caused. Yet John Adams records that “the act to destroy the Land Bank Scheme raised a greater ferment in this Province than the Stamp Act did.” It was an eighteenth-century fiat-money delusion, closely resembling, in its fundamental principles, the similar crazes which have disturbed us in recent years. Private gain and supposed patriotism were blended in the eighteenth-century projects, just as they were in those of the last half of the nineteenth century. The mixture, indeed, is not uncommon; and, skilfully compounded, can surely be relied on at almost any time to rouse in many a resolute bearing and lofty sentiments. The eighteenth-century scheme, revealing unmistakable





MOUNT WOLLASTON (MERRYMOUNT) IN 1904



MOUNT WOLLASTON IN 1839



CITY SEAL





aspects of a social antagonism, swept through the Province. The people—that is, the farmers, artisans, and smaller tradesmen—became roused over it to a fighting pitch. They accordingly packed the House of Representatives with its partisans. Governor Thomas Hutchinson subsequently wrote, in his history of that period, “it appeared that by far the majority of the representatives for 1740 [the year in which John Quincy was dropped] were subscribers to, or favorers of, the scheme, and they have ever since been distinguished by the name of the Land Bank House.”

The notion of a bank of issue, the currency of which should be based on land values, had haunted the Province for years. Of silver and gold there was little in circulation; and that little was constantly, under the ordinary and now well-understood conditions of trade, drained out of the country. There was no pretence that the paper currency, which displaced it, was redeemable, for the expenses of the government were met by the emission of bills of public credit. When these bills were emitted, a specific pledge was made of a “fund” to be provided for retiring the emission; this fund to be derived from taxes, which were to be imposed at a future time. Taxes were therefore imposed to retire bills previously issued to meet public expenses, which, in turn, were again met by the emission of more bills. As the result of such a financial policy systematically pursued, the currency not unnaturally became thoroughly demoralized. The outstanding bills of credit steadily declined in value, until it became obvious that a financial crisis of some sort was

imminent. Under such circumstances other cure-all panaceas and quack nostrums are always in order. It was so after the French wars of the eighteenth century. It was so during the War of Independence. It was again so during all the forty years which followed the War of Secession in the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth-century experience, as might surely have been anticipated, the man arrived, nostrum in hand, as the fateful hour was about to strike. The existing evil was to be remedied through an ingenious revival and adaptation of the old Land Bank idea. John Coleman—a needy Boston merchant, Hutchinson called him—was to create, with others who might join him, a people's cheap currency,—a fiat money, as it has since been termed, founded on the value of farms and homes and manufactures. The scheme was fairly redolent of that form of popular favor which frequently assumes the name and guise of patriotism. The faith which the people had in themselves and in their native land was to be imparted to bank issues of paper money. The notes of Coleman's Land Bank, as good as gold, were to supersede the use of hard money. So John Coleman and others, to the number of some three hundred and ninety-five, presented to the legislature their scheme, which provided, originally, for the emission of £150,000 in currency secured on lands and commodities of a value at once substantial and visible to all, and which could not take to themselves wings. So alluring was the project to its devisers, and, withal, so rapidly did its popularity increase, that, while yet the legislature was cautiously examining into its merits, other

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subscribers, numbering eventually over a thousand, were added to the list of its promoters. Mainly "yeomen," these last did not, as a rule, subscribe individually for over £100 of the currency. In exchange for it they gave mortgages on their farms and homes. Braintree contributed fourteen such subscribers, among whom were William Hunt, Amos Stetson, Thomas Crosby, Benjamin Beale, Danl. Thayer, and Moses Belcher, Jr.

The leading merchants and other men of business experience in Boston and adjacent towns saw at once the perilous character of the Land Bank. In a declaration headed by Peter Faneuil, and which numbered among its signers members of some of Braintree's first families, such as Edmund and Josiah Quincy and the son of the speaker, Norton Quincy, warning was given that those whose names were affixed would not receive the notes of the Land Bank in trade or any other business transaction whatever, as they could not but believe that the scheme would be of "pernicious consequence." This announcement called forth passionate objections from the Land-bankers, the character of which may be gathered from a communication printed in one of the papers of that day, the diminutive *News Letter*. This communication also reveals among the people of the Province a growing sense of social distinctions. The line drawn between the so-called "patriot" and the "loyalist" was becoming confused with a new and horizontal rift of cleavage, now for the first time beginning to divide men of substance from the struggling farmers and artisans. The opposition merchants are many, says the

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writer to the News Letter, and some are very rich, "but then it must not be supposed that they are of equal weight with all the rest of the Province. If you consider how they obtained their influence and the ill use made of it, you won't wonder we begin to be tired of it." The "ill use" here alluded to was plainly pointed out in the claim made in the letter that the Land Bank bills would "prevent borrowing money and paying exorbitant interest."

Jonathan Belcher, the governor of the Province from 1730 to 1741, early showed himself wholly opposed to the bank. His objections also were well founded; and, at the outset, no personal element confused the issue. The royal governor was quick to take advantage of certain phrases contained in a report made by a committee of the legislature in March, 1740, adverse to the scheme. These he embodied in a proclamation, representing that the notes would "have a great tendency to en-damage His Majesty's good subjects as to their property," and consequently warning all against receiving or passing them. The House of Representatives rapidly began to reflect the temper spreading throughout the Commonwealth, and to take tone therefrom. According to Hutchinson, "perhaps the major part in number of the inhabitants of the Province openly or secretly are well wishers of the" bank. Consequently, no matter how strenuously the governor urged the representatives, they could not be induced to pass any decisive judgment upon the scheme nor forbid the issue of the notes. This course, on their part, served only to incite the governor to a policy yet more aggressive in character. During



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the recess of the House, striking right and left as with a bludgeon, he issued proclamation after proclamation, in a vain endeavor to crush the portentous and fast-waxing danger. In arbitrary and characteristic fashion he threatened with dismissal any officer of the government—all, indeed, who held commissions or licenses of any description—who should countenance the obnoxious bank, or honor its notes. Attorneys were strictly admonished to discourage the circulation of the prohibited currency and to exercise an espionage over justices of the peace; and justices of the peace, similarly warned, were urged to keep a close watch over taverners and others. Delinquent military officials were singled out to be disciplined. Colonel Quincy and others high in rank were instructed by letter to inquire into the conduct of all holding commissions under them in regard to their attitude toward the Land Bank; and such among them as persisted in receiving or passing its bills were to be dismissed. Great was the consequent consternation. A deep searching of hearts was all-pervasive; as also a painful weighing of convictions over against the assurance of the placemen's present comfort. As if to inject the last drop of bitterness into the controversy, the informer was abroad; and so from the Berkshire Hills to Cape Cod confusion reigned.

The mass of the community, victims of a "people's currency" and cheap-money delusion, believed that the Land Bank would prove a blessing, and as such would save the Province from grave disasters. This conviction was also shared by not a few of the official class. Among

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such was Samuel Adams, father of the patriot of the same name. This Samuel Adams held a commission as justice of the peace, and, immediately upon the issuance of the proclamation of the governor aimed at those so placed, he, with a fellow-official named Choate, wrote to Belcher. In their missive they bluntly and boldly informed him that holding office under him was "made inconsistent with Prosecuting the Manufactory Scheme in which we are concerned and whereon in our humble opinions the interest of our Native Country so much depends as to require the utmost of our endeavors to promote the same, Therefore we do resign our commissions of Trusts." Later the governor, taking no other notice of these resignations than to allude to the presumptuous defence of the bank in which these officials "are determined to persist," dismissed Adams and Choate contumeliously from their positions. None the less, Samuel Adams, as one of its directors, "prosecuted" the scheme most zealously; somewhat, be it added, to the embarrassment of his son financially in later days.

Through eleven troubled years Jonathan Belcher was royal governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay; and, subsequently transferred to New Jersey, he for ten years, and until his death in 1757, administered the affairs of that Province both to his own satisfaction and to that of the people. A Boston boy, he was to the manner born. He was, also, a graduate of Harvard College, nine years the senior of John Quincy. And yet Governor Belcher was neither a fortunate nor a popular chief magistrate of Massachusetts. Though a victim of



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the gout, the suffering caused by attacks of which may have made him irritable, his person and presence are said to have been graceful and pleasing, while his manner was hearty and his address affable. But, known to be a friend and advocate of high prerogative principles in government, he was given to intrigue and suspected of tortuous political methods. Not in sympathy with the mass of the community he was set to rule over, he was, when opposed, inclined to arbitrary measures. He was unfortunate also in the period of his administration; for it fell in the midst of what a grave historian has not hesitated to term a "bog" of insolvency,—a miry waste in which Massachusetts floundered about for over half a century, continually seeking to devise some scheme by which something other than specie could be made available as currency and in discharge of debts. The financial situation had thus become well-nigh intolerable in Belcher's time. Trade had turned into gambling, and neither buyer nor seller could "calculate intelligently what would be the worth to-morrow of the printed rags which passed between them to-day." The private bank project was sure to aggravate yet further the evils of the situation, and in his opposition to it Belcher was wholly right; but, unfortunately, the methods of opposition he had recourse to "served only to exasperate the people, and beget a malignant spirit." The usual result followed. In the popular mind, advocacy of the Land Bank became identified with opposition to royal prerogative and an arbitrary administration, the action of which was dictated from Whitehall. Everywhere the stub-

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born colonial spirit of resistance and retaliation was aroused. Boston sent rebellious Land-bankers to the next legislature. Braintree was both as unintimidated and as unreasoning as Boston, and defiantly voted (though not without debate, for John Quincy was moderator), that in the matter of town rates the constables were to pay and the treasurer to receive Land Bank bills. This bordered closely on deliberate insurrection; and, had the same action been taken by many other towns, a wholly premature revolutionary movement might not impossibly then have assumed shape. The Braintree voters, moreover, capped their contumacy and misplaced patriotism by electing for representative a Land Bank subscriber, Captain William Hunt. Thus Colonel Quincy, greatly to his credit, was, on an altogether false issue, thrown out of the legislative position which he had so long and honorably filled.

In May of 1741, while the excitement was still at its height, the legislature again assembled. Promptly it elected as speaker Samuel Watts, a Land Bank director. As promptly the choice was vetoed by Governor Belcher. Then the House chose William Fairfield, who, though no official of the Land Bank, was a strong advocate of it,—a Land Bank partisan. He was endured till the next day only, when the governor dissolved the House because it disclosed “so much of an inclination to support the fraudulent and pernicious” scheme. At the same brief session Samuel Adams, the ejected, was chosen to His Majesty’s Council, together with fourteen other aggressive Land-bankers. The governor with scant

courtesy, flung them all out. They and their sympathizers reinforced their persistence with such phrases as that used by Henry Lee,—“the privilege of an Englishman is my sufficient warrant”; while Belcher, irritated that a colony which “enjoyed more privileges than most of his Majesty’s Dominions (happy New England thus distinguished),” should prove so wilful, grew more arbitrary. His course greatly stimulated the jealousy and suspicion always felt in Massachusetts of government through the “Lords of Trade and Plantation,” who now more than ever were intervening. The great majority of the people were in open array against him; and events were hastening to a crisis. Not only were subscribers to the Land Bank threatened with ruin, not only were officials closely sympathetic with the provincial feeling deprived of their commissions, but the multitude, sincere in their patriotic impulse, had a feeling that their most sacred rights were being trampled on. Mutterings of armed resistance were heard. The country farmers and the Boston artisans secretly combined. Word was quietly passed around that on the 19th of this very month of May some twenty thousand men would march on Boston, where two thousand more would be ready to unite with them. They would break the barrier erected against the circulation of the Land Bank notes. They would compel the merchants to take them for corn. Of this ferment one of the centres seems to have been Braintree. Notices of the rising were posted on its meeting-house, or placed on the walls of its taverns. Other towns near by—Stoughton, Weymouth, Hingham—saw like no-

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tices:—"Here are a number of men that want the company, of our design there is no fear of failing, our names must be kept secret." Captain Pierce, of Milton, was to lead them. Such were some of the statements made by willing or unwilling witnesses.

These rumors were obvious exaggerations. Still they were the flying spindrift attesting the tumultuous character of the storm which tore the waters of both political and social life. Enough is revealed to show why John Adams could afterwards say that a greater ferment was raised than when, years later, the Stamp Act was imposed. Whatever the nature or extent of the threatened insurrection, it was not kept so secret but that rumors of it reached the ear of Governor Belcher. Nothing whatever, either documentary or in the way of tradition, has come down to this generation throwing light on the personal or social relations which existed between Governor Belcher and Colonel Quincy. Boston was then a comparatively small and compact town, with less than twenty thousand inhabitants; and, both Boston boys, they were some eight years only apart both at school and college, Belcher being the elder. Subsequent to college days Colonel Quincy was speaker of the House of Representatives during all but the closing year of Belcher's long administration. The two men must therefore have known each other well, and their official relations at least had necessarily been close. On the Land Bank issue they were also clearly in full accord. Naturally, therefore, when disturbing rumors of popular ferment in the towns about Braintree were brought to the governor's notice,



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he at once turned to Colonel Quincy for assistance. Here are his instructions sent post haste, doubtless, to Braintree: "His Excellency desires you would forthwith make strict inquiry into the matter mentioned in the enclosed paper, and if you find anything in the story, that you consult with Mr. Justice Lincoln [of Hingham], upon it, And that he join with you in suppressing this riotous and disorderly Proceeding; and that you report the state of the Business as soon as may be. It will be best to act with as much privacy and caution as the affair will permit, lest by making the matter too public the people should be put in Mind of that which they had but little thought of before."

The mission intrusted to Colonel Quincy seems to have been carried out successfully. At least, no disturbance occurred. Perhaps the proclamation issued a little later, conveying the highly gratifying intelligence that the unpopular Belcher had been removed and William Shirley appointed as his successor, was most productive of quiet. The change was fortunate, and was made at just the right moment; for, by this time, the British Board of Trade, which had been appealed to, had discovered that an old Act of Parliament, called the "Bubble Act," passed in 1719, at the time of the collapse of the South Sea Company craze, could be made to do duty as an effective weapon against the proposed Massachusetts Land Bank; and thus, to quote the language of Palfrey, "The Land Bank Company was caught in its own devices. For besides that, by force of this law, the company must desist from all further issue of its bills, each

individual member of it was made liable, not only for the negotiable value of them, but for the sum at which, according to the stipulation on their face, they were redeemable in silver, with the further addition of interest from the time of their being put into circulation."

Whether just or otherwise, this action was certainly drastic. It brought the Land Bank scheme to a summary close. The directors not only "disincorporated themselves," but they proceeded to call in their bills outstanding, and "consumed them to ashes" so effectually that, as Belcher's successor shortly after wrote, "not one honest man will suffer much by it." But this course of treatment, however salutary as well as effective, emanating as it did from a foreign source always in Massachusetts regarded with suspicion and jealousy, was far from acceptable to the community to which it was applied. It might be paternal: it was certainly arbitrary. The Massachusetts Bay community had never taken kindly to paternalism; and they now fiercely resented this application of the rod. It aroused in the hearts of the provincials not only a feeling of intense resentment, but emotions of desperation even. The representatives asserted in their General Court Journal that, if they "did not struggle in every way to maintain their liberty, they would act more like the vassals of an arbitrary prince than like subjects of King George their most gracious Sovereign"; and, as John Adams subsequently put it in one of his controversial papers, "This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution." Those



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contemporary chroniclers may not be far wrong who asserted that, if Belcher had continued much longer in office, a collision with Great Britain, more or less formidable in character, might have occurred in 1741. The theme chosen for his part in the Harvard Commencement of 1740 by the younger Sam Adams is suggestive on this point. It was set forth in these words: "Whether it be lawful to resist the superior magistrates, if the Commonwealth cannot be otherwise preserved?" Delivered at that precise moment, it was no abstract question, no academic anticipation of a strife looming on a distant horizon. It was a present, a vital question, urged by the thoughts and emotions fostered in the speaker's own home, inspired by the indignation felt for the contumely to which his father had been subjected in that very spring.

The exhuming of the South Sea "Bubble Act," and its parliamentary application to the Province, was one of the closing episodes of Governor Belcher's administration. For it he was, probably with justice, held responsible, and it intensified the odium with which he had already come to be regarded. None the less it smoothed the path of his successor, for the Land Bank scheme was removed from it. By great good fortune, also, Governor Shirley, though not, like Belcher, Massachusetts born, was as courteous and tactful as his predecessor had been irritable and arbitrary; and, although he had to carry out the provisions of an oppressive, even if salutary, Act of Parliament, he did it in such fashion as to work the least injury. He calmed the

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storm, adroitly directing the attention of the people to the Spanish War, its aspect of danger to the colonies, and the need of enlistments. With its eyes set on the costly, if successful, Louisburg expedition, the Province, in very helpless fashion, drifted into complete public insolvency. The popular delusion that money can be made out of paper by virtue of an act of legislation worked its disastrous consequences. Almost every possible ingenious expedient for making payments with new promises to pay had been, or now, was tried; and its inefficacy proved. At last, as an outcome wholly unforeseen, of the brilliant success which crowned Governor Shirley's early military ventures, the financial capacity of Thomas Hutchinson devised, in spite of popular opposition, a way "of extrication from a state of things in which Massachusetts, with ample resources in the capacities of her position and the energy of her people was [for over half a century] kept in a miserable state of indigence and discomfort."

This, however, is anticipating the course of events, in which the Land Bank scheme of 1740 was but a single episode. Colonel John Quincy was not concerned with those later developments through which the Province of Massachusetts Bay, burdened with merely the ordinary oppressions of the old-world, eighteenth-century, foreign misgovernment, drifted on toward the hour when extraordinary impositions in the form of "writs of assistance" and "Stamp Act" stirred the people to overt deeds of rebellion.

We are now, however, in a position to see that Colonel

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Quincy, amid the confusions and perplexities of his time, pursued the one course open for the immediate relief and the ultimate liberation of his country. Obviously, he was side-tracked in his political career because of his opposition to a popular movement in itself inherently unsound, though for a time identified in the popular mind with patriotic aspirations. His affiliation with a royal governor, as eager to oppose the self-governing instincts of the people as he was ready to crush a fiat-money craze, was a mere unavoidable incident; and the supposition that, because of such affiliation, he was justly rejected by the Braintree constituency is contrary to every consideration of historic perspective. The situation was plainly confused; nor did the issues of the period present themselves in simple form. Everything, however, goes to show that John Quincy was one with the community of which he was a part in all their higher aspirations, that he set his face like a flint against any encroachments upon the rights and privileges of the Province; but how could he, a sagacious, level-headed man, raise the standard of revolt against England with "Liberty and a Land Bank" for a battle-cry? To choose deliberately between the alternatives thrust upon him was, to a far-seeing and sensitive man, little less than tragical. On the one hand, blending with the delusive visions of wealth, were the groping aspirations of the provincial home-rulers. On the other hand was partnership with the recognized exponent of prerogative and alien rule in the destruction of the scheme created by those delusions. It was not given to him, as it was to

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Charles Sumner in his fight for the freedom of the slave, to feel and declare—"There is no other side!" There was another side; and the fact that John Quincy did not halt between two opinions bears witness to his strength of character. Disregarding consequences, as far as he personally was concerned, he openly and sturdily devoted his energies to what he conceived to be the duty nearest at hand; and so in that crisis of 1741 John Quincy proved true to himself, true to his convictions that the Land Bank scheme was fraught with measureless disaster to its infatuated supporters. Accordingly, until the scheme was crushed, he stood by the constituted authorities, accepting the odium inseparable from that line of action. The day of freedom's fight, clear of the Land Bank and the fiat money of 1741,—though, unfortunately, not of a fiat money of its own invention,—was yet to come. Against that day he maintained the ancient league with righteousness, doing the work proper to the hour. May we not apply to him those words which Morley uses to characterize Gladstone—"A glorious nature that doth put life into business, with a solid and sober nature that hath as much of the ballast as of the sail"?

While Colonel Quincy was bearing in dignified silence the disfavor of his fellow-citizens, that very unsavory demagogue, Joseph Gooch, took advantage of the speaker's popular obscurity to displace him as colonel of the Suffolk regiment. The account of what then occurred is interesting enough to be presented in all the fulness with which President John Adams has preserved it. With free strokes of the pen he presents a



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rough outline of that familiar personality—a stage demagogue in a Puritan community. With the Land-bankers in power and the voters demoralized, it was comparatively easy for this wealthy Boston lawyer to invade Braintree, rout its respectabilities, and parade as the popular figure of the day. “He had been a man of pleasure,” wrote President Adams, “and bore the indelible marks of it on his face to the grave. . . . Not succeeding at the bar in Boston, he had recourse to religion to assist him, joined the Old South Church, to avail himself of the influence of the sisterhood, and set up for representative for the town of Boston, but failed, and disappointed of his hopes in law and politics, he renounced the city, came up to Quincy [then part of Braintree], hired a house, turned churchman and set himself to intriguing for promotion both in the military and civil departments. He interceded with the favorites of Governor Shirley, in this place, to procure him the commission of colonel in the regiment of militia, and an election for representative of the town in the General Court. He promised to build a steeple to their church, at his own expense.

“It was at this time the corrupt practice of treating, as they called it, at training and at elections was introduced, which so long prevailed in the town of Braintree.” The most liberal advantage was taken of this custom by Gooch. Like water from the town pump, beer and cider flowed on the training-field; while, in the taverns, they were constantly on tap. A display of such exuberant good-fellowship melted the hearts of the naturally re-

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served New England farmer, nor could Governor Shirley, then a resident of Braintree, resist the voice of the multitude, and even the importunity of his own church. He reluctantly dismissed Colonel Quincy, saying years afterwards that nothing he had ever done in his administration had given him so much pain; and Gooch was made colonel in his stead. "Application was made to all the captains, lieutenants and ensigns, in that part of the regiment which lies within the three parishes of the ancient town of Braintree, to see if they would accept commissions under Colonel Gooch, and agree to vote for him as representative for the town. The then present officers were men among the most respectable of the inhabitants, in point of property, understanding and character. They rejected the proposition with scorn. My father was among them," continues President Adams, "he was offered a captain's commission. He spurned the offer with disdain; would serve in the militia under no colonel but Quincy." But with the new officers—"these were of a very different character"—Gooch prevailed. He was elected representative over even the Land-banker, Captain Hunt, not improbably himself one of the more respectable officers who would not serve under Gooch. The demoralization was, however, only temporary, for President Adams goes on, "all the substantial people of the town aroused themselves," and turned Gooch out, "which so enraged him that he swore he would no longer live in Braintree; renounced the church, refused to build their steeple, built him a house on Milton Hill, and there passed the remainder of his days."



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From this welter of confusions Colonel Quincy emerged, inviting confidence by his sane and sagacious judgment. Even in the hour of their infatuation his own townspeople did not cease to call upon him to serve on the more exacting committees. After the old fashion he was chosen moderator of the March meeting of 1743, and they also paid him the compliment (the highest they then could) of electing him selectman with his loyal comrade, Lieutenant John Adams; and thus early was it exemplified that the statesmen of this community regard no office too humble for them in which to serve their neighbors and fellow-citizens, and John Quincy, in the simplicity of his devotion to the public good, only showed the true attitude of a citizen in a free democracy. His large experience and abilities were not, however, destined to remain long unemployed in their fulness for the benefit of the entire Province. Once more, in 1744, he was returned to the House of Representatives; and, in all, he was elected four additional years to that body. He did not become again "the Honorable Speaker," but a marked distinction was paid him by his elevation to the higher chamber, as it was accounted, the Governor's Council. Here, with the urbane and conciliatory Shirley, he wrought for eight successive years,—a period which included some of the most trying experiences of the French War, with its Indian accompaniments. When at last he retired from office, the people, though sorely oppressed in trade, were, in a political sense, "as buoyant as ever."

Of Cavour it has been said that he had all the prudence and all the imprudence of the true statesman. John

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Quincy was prudent,—always prudent; but, on that high level which gave moral stability to his career, he secured the confidence of two generations of contemporaries. Chosen by the colonists to the most responsible offices to which a native-born New England man might aspire, higher position for him there was not. An American, he asked for no more honorable place than to be in the van of those who were contending for the rights of Americans. Said King George III. to John Adams in their first interview after independence was secured, “I understand you are much attached to your country?” “I have no attachment but to my country,” quickly responded Adams. “An honest man,” rejoined the king, “will never have any other.”

When he finally retired to his farm on the shores of Boston Bay, Colonel Quincy was some sixty-five years old. Here, in the mansion built about the time of his marriage, he passed in apparent contentment the closing years of a busy and useful life,—a sequence not always assured. But, before coming to the last scene of all, something should be said of his untiring labors for the town. I had the curiosity to read through the Braintree records to learn how large those labors were. I found that he had been chosen moderator forty-two times, at least,—a record which, it is safe to say, has not been surpassed. To enumerate the committees on which Colonel Quincy served would be tedious. An exception should be made, however, in case of the one created in 1729, to determine “whether it may be an advantage to the town to be divided into two towns.” The North Precinct took

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the lead in this matter, and John Quincy was made chairman of the committee, which agreed on a favorable report; but the two other precincts would not let the North Precinct go. In 1756 the North Precinct again brought forward a "scheme" to divide the town; and again it was defeated. If, as is not unlikely, John Quincy was also the moving spirit in this second attempt at a severance, it would make him, in a more intimate sense, the father of the town created nearly forty years later.

An examination of the church records shows that Colonel Quincy was as deeply interested in spiritual as in secular affairs. Their every page makes manifest his hearty co-operation with the pastors whose ministry coincided with the more active period of his life,—the Rev. John Hancock and the Rev. Lemuel Briant. Frequently elected moderator, this otherwise busy man assumed also the perplexing duties of the parish committees. When the Rev. Mr. Briant, an advanced liberal, is charged with heresy by a council of sister churches, it is John Quincy who acts as chairman of the committee chosen to consider the charges; and the report returned by the committee, which we may assume to have been drawn up by the chairman, is for that day a remarkable production. It was decisive in its defence of the pastor's "right of private judgment," and its commendation of him "for the pains he takes to promote a free and impartial examination into all articles of our holy religion, so that all may judge, even of themselves, what is right." Such language then used was indicative of a vigorous and independent mind of high order. A masterful hand is re-

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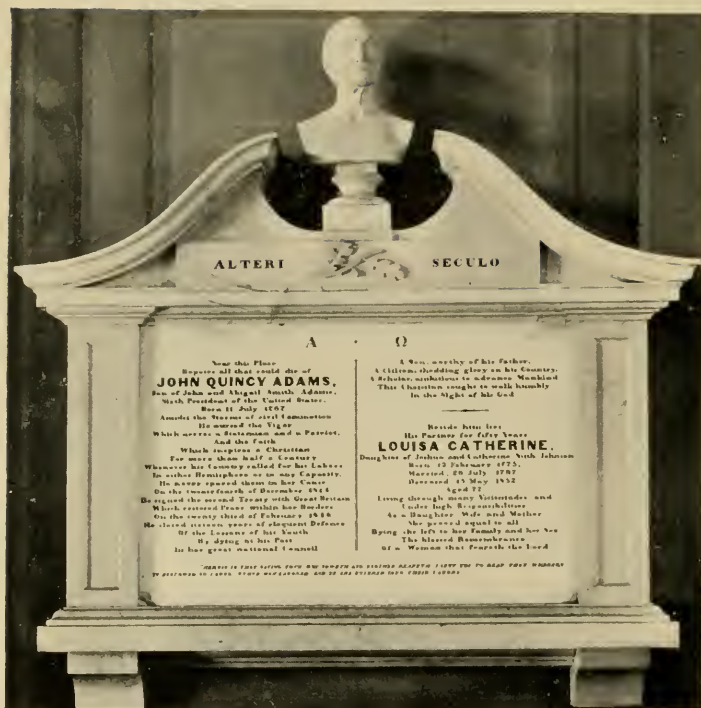
vealed. When a new meeting-house is to be built, he, as a matter of course, is put on the committee. As early in his church relations as 1723, Major Quincy "was fairly and clearly chosen by written votes to the office of tuning the Psalm in our assemblies of public worship;" and, dying, he bequeathed a silver tankard for the communion service which bears this inscription—"The gift of the Hon'ble John Quincy, Esq., to the First Church in Braintree, 1767."

A brief sketch printed in the columns of the Massachusetts Gazette of July 23, 1767, closes with these words: "In private life he was exemplary;—he adorn'd the christian profession by an holy life, a strict observance of the Lord's day, and a constant attendance upon the public ordinances of religion,—in one word, he was a gentleman true to his trust, diligent and active in public business, punctual in promises and appointments, just towards all men, and devout towards God."

Before John Quincy passed peacefully away in his own home, one glimpse of him there is afforded through the diary of John Adams, who, then a man of thirty, had some fourteen months before become the husband of a grand-daughter of the Master of Mt. Wollaston. The entry is of the 25th of December, 1765. It is as follows: "Went not to Christmas; dined at home; drank tea at grandfather Quincy's. The old gentleman inquisitive about the hearing before the Governor and Council; about the Governor's and Secretary's looks and behaviour, and about the final determination of the Board. The old lady as merry and chatty as ever, with







TABLET TO PRESIDENT JOHN QUINCY ADAMS



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her stories out of the newspapers." The hearing was on the memorial of the town of Boston that the courts of law, arbitrarily closed in retaliation for the Stamp Act riots, should be opened. John Adams appeared with Gridley and Otis as counsel for the town in support of the memorial.

Dying on the 13th of July, 1767, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, John Quincy left four children: his only son Norton, who, passing his days in the home of his father, died without issue; Elizabeth, who married the Rev. William Smith, of Weymouth; Anna, who married John Thaxter, of Hingham; and Lucy, who married Cotton Tufts, of Weymouth. To Elizabeth and her husband, the pastor of the Weymouth church, was born Abigail, who married John Adams. This is the bond of kinship which unites the Adamses and the Quincys. It was emphasized by the transmission of a name; for, as old John Quincy lay dying at Mt. Wollaston, this granddaughter of his gave birth to a son; and when the next day, July 12, as was then the practice, the child was baptized, its grandmother, who was present at its birth, requested that it might be called after her father. Long afterwards the child thus named wrote of this incident: "It was filial tenderness that gave the name. It was the name of one passing from earth to immortality. These have been among the strongest links of my attachment to the name of Quincy, and have been to me through life a perpetual admonition to do nothing unworthy of it."

However the links were forged, we all feel that attach-

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ment to the name of Quincy. May it grow till it shall be to each of us a perpetual admonition to do nothing unworthy of Quincy! May the lives of all who have lived within its limits, and the labors of all who have devoted themselves to its peace and prosperity, inspire us with kindred virtues! And may he whose name it bears marshal us also the way to victories of freedom, friendship, faith! It was, it is said, a custom of the Locrian Greeks to leave a vacant place in their charging ranks for the spirit of Ajax, their elect hero. As the people of this community move onward in generations through the years to come, may they invoke as the genius of the vanward line no presence less worthy than the shade of John Quincy!

### ADDRESS BY BROOKS ADAMS.

It would be absurd for me to introduce to you my own brother, who, to say the least, is as well known to you as I am myself, were it not that I can say of him something he cannot say of himself.

If it be true that the best lesson a man can learn is to honor his father and his mother, because thereby he learns to respect himself, it should follow that the best lesson any community can learn is to honor their ancestors, since by so doing they are taught to be ashamed to disgrace them.

In this light my brother has been a public benefactor, for among his generation no man has done more to unroll before those who shall succeed us the noble record of the past than Charles Francis Adams.

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### ADDRESS BY CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

Sixteen years ago it devolved on me to address a Quincy audience on an occasion not dissimilar to that of to-day. Standing where I now stand, I then spoke of an event which had occurred one hundred years before,—the incorporation of what was previously the North Precinct of Braintree as an independent municipality, to be called Quincy. We were celebrating a first Centennial. Then the burden of the day devolved on me. It is different now. We are here to commemorate him after whom the town was named, one who had been five-and-twenty years in his grave when Quincy was incorporated, and my part is strictly subordinate. After the elaborate and exhaustive address delivered by Mr. Wilson, not much at best remains to be said of John Quincy. The preparation of that address has been with Mr. Wilson a labor of love, and the information he has slowly and painfully gathered together is forcibly suggestive of the vast mass of historical material in the dusty archives of the Commonwealth, in which he has so long and so toilsomely delved. What I have to contribute to the occasion will, therefore, occupy hardly more than a brief ten minutes, and I shall surely close before the hands of yonder clock mark the quarter-hour.

Of Colonel John Quincy, of Mt. Wollaston, it can truly be said he is strictly typical of his time,—a time, as Mr. Wilson has told us, now lost in oblivion. He be-

longed to what is known in Massachusetts history as the Provincial Period; for the existence of Massachusetts as a community distinctly and naturally divides itself into three periods of development,—the Colonial, the Provincial, and the Period of the Commonwealth. The first of the three, and, perhaps, historically the most interesting, began in 1620, with the settlement of Plymouth, and with that of Boston ten years later; and it closed with the abrogation in 1684 of the original charter of King James I., consummated through the action of the English courts of law. Then followed a brief interlude, almost of chaos, in which the most prominent figure is that Governor Edmund Andros whom the colonists, one day after the English Revolution of 1688 became known, rising *en masse*, put, as the expression went, “in a strong place”; in other words, they shut him up, a deposed prisoner of state, in what was afterwards known as Castle William. The interregnum, so to speak, dating from the abrogation of King James’s charter, lasted seven years, to 1691, when the charter of William and Mary was matured; and, under it, what was subsequently known as the Province of Massachusetts Bay came into existence. In May of the following year the first royal governor, William Phipps, landed in Boston; and, from 1692, the succession of royal governors continued until the last of them, Governor Sir William Howe, left Boston with the evacuating British forces in March, 1776. Another brief interregnum then ensued, until the Commonwealth of Massachusetts came into being upon the formal adoption of the Constitution of 1780.

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Now it so chances that Colonel John Quincy was born in July, 1689. He was thus a little more than two years old when the Charter of William and Mary passed the seals, and not yet three when the first royal governor landed. He died in July, 1767, and the famous Tea Impost Bill—though at the time of his death the fact was unknown in New England—had been enacted by the British Parliament one short month only before,—in the preceding June. Thus the life of John Quincy was exactly coterminous with the Massachusetts Provincial Period, for, born three months after the deposition of Andros, he died in the month ensuing the passage of that Act of Parliament which proved the beginning of the end. I have also said that Colonel John Quincy was typical of his time,—of a period lost in obscurity; for, historically, it is undeniable that its Provincial Period is for Massachusetts the least interesting of its history. It naturally is, therefore, that one of the three periods which has passed into the deepest popular oblivion. With the Colonial Period, or that of the settlement, we are all more or less familiar. Its traditions abide. Names connected with it are still household words. It goes without saying, also, that we are equally familiar, indeed even more familiar, with the Revolutionary Period and what thereafter followed down to our own time. But the eighty years which intervened between the ending of the Colony and the beginning of the Commonwealth have practically passed out of memory; and so Colonel John Quincy merely shared the fate of the epoch in which he lived and played his part.



For instance, if I were now to ask those here to name any character prominent in public life during Provincial times, I gravely doubt whether a single name would be suggested. If one was suggested, it would probably be that of Thomas Hutchinson, practically the last royal governor. As respects literature, it would be the same. I have myself been somewhat of a student of the writings which have come down to us from the period of the Province, but I found them utterly devoid of imagination, of research, or of scientific value. Essentially theological, the Provincial Period left behind it little more than a dreary accumulation of pulpit discourses. The two books it produced of which I have ever had occasion to make considerable use were the "Magnalia" of Cotton Mather and the "Sermons" of Jonathan Edwards,—works which, it may safely be said, are distinctly, in the phrase of Hamlet, "caviare to the general." It was the same with events. They had no real significance. The Indian wars had constituted a great and interesting feature of the earlier time; but they ended, in 1676, with the death of King Philip at Mt. Hope. Thereafter we hear of what is known as Queen Anne's War, the Old French War, King George's War and the taking of Louisburg, while the pathetic exile of the Arcadian settlers is made familiar by the verses of Longfellow. The story of Wolfe and the capture of Quebec, the great epoch-making incident of the last French war, alone stand vividly out. The political issues of the period, at best trivial and monotonous, are now, to a large extent, well-nigh incomprehensible. The community, very limited in numbers, was wretchedly poor;

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and its poverty was aggravated by everlasting controversies over the issue of paper money—provincial bills of the old tenor and the new tenor—and projects of land banks such as Mr. Wilson has described; as, also, the tedious, ever-recurring question relating to the salary of the royally appointed governor, whether it should be settled on him during his tenure of the office, or by virtue of an annual legislative vote. So, if I were now asked in what narrative the history of the period in which Colonel John Quincy was so prominent a public character could best be studied, I should be compelled to reply—in that child's book written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, entitled "Grandfather's Chair." For general perusal the standard histories are simply unreadable.

But let me illustrate:—Mr. Wilson, in the course of his address, made repeated references to Governor Burnet, whose death, he tells us, Hutchinson ascribes largely to irritation and worry incident to his unending controversies with the provincial legislative body. Mr. Wilson has also spoken at length and very interestingly of Governor Belcher, and his connection with the Land Bank of 1740. Here is what Nathaniel Hawthorne says of these two great characters of their day, in that most striking sketch of his entitled "Howe's Masquerade," one of his four charming legends of the Province House. The scene is laid early in the year 1776, and the author is describing the weird procession of governors, as the figures composing it emerged from the upper landing of the Province House, and, descending the broad flight of stairs, passed, in the presence of General Sir William Howe and his

guests, through the ante-chamber of the official residence of the representatives of royalty. After picturing Governor Shute as an officer "in a scarlet and embroidered uniform, cut in a fashion old enough to have been worn by the Duke of Marlborough," Hawthorne then goes on: "Next came a portly gentleman, wearing a coat of shaggy cloth, lined with silken velvet. He had sense, shrewdness and humor in his face, and a folio volume under his arm; but his aspect was that of a man vexed and tormented beyond all patience, and harassed almost to death. He went hastily down, and was followed by a dignified person, dressed in a purple velvet suit, with very rich embroidery. His demeanor would have possessed much stateliness, only that a grievous fit of the gout compelled him to hobble from stair to stair, with contortions of face and body. When Dr. Byles beheld this figure on the staircase, he shivered as with an ague, but continued to watch him steadfastly, until the gouty gentleman had reached the threshold, made a gesture of anguish and despair, and vanished into the outer gloom, whither the funeral music summoned him.

"Governor Belcher!—my old patron!—in his very shape and dress!" gasped Dr. Byles. "This is an awful mockery!"

Here are two of the leading public characters of the period portrayed to the life, and yet I gravely doubt whether one of you who now listen to this extract has any distinct impression of either of them, or of Governor Shute who preceded them, or of Governor Shirley who followed them. None the less, these were the four royal



*His Excellency*  
*Captain General & Governor of the*  
*Massachusetts Bay & New Hampshire*  
*Gov. Belcher*

 **JONATHAN BELCHER**  
*Gov. of the Mass's Provinces*  
*1711-1712*





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governors of Massachusetts Bay during the long period of John Quincy's public life. If they are quite forgotten, why should John Quincy be even partially remembered?

No! Chance largely rules the game; and, whether in arms, in statesmanship, in literature, in art or science, no man can make his mark unless opportunity offers. In the case of John Quincy opportunity never offered. The stage on which he played his part was small, its atmosphere frigid. Again, as Mr. Wilson has suggested, had he lived before, and under different auspices, there is reason to assume he might have been the compatriot and coadjutor of Hampden, and as conspicuous as was Speaker Lenthall before, or John Hancock later. Had his lot been cast in the years which followed, he might not impossibly have been a fellow-actor with Washington. He showed many of the characteristics of each and all of those named. Simply, for him the opportunity never presented itself. He was of his age!

But it must always be borne in mind that John Quincy died in July, 1767, on the eve of that revolutionary convulsion known as our War of Independence. The importance and dramatic character of that convulsion, the overshadowing fame of those who rose into prominence in it, were, as Mr. Wilson has truly observed, even as a deluge, in that they first submerged, and then obliterated from the sands of time, the footprints of those who had gone before, and who had, none the less, prepared and made wide the way for the succeeding generation.

Thus born amid the throes of what is known as the

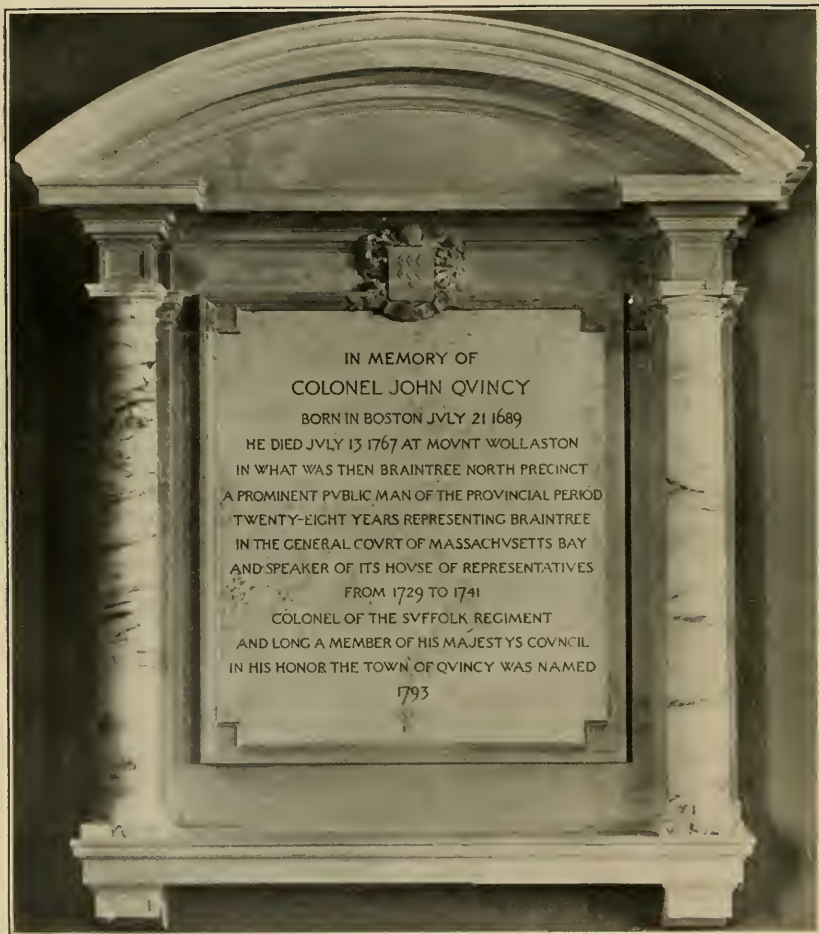
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“Glorious Revolution of 1688,”—that upheaval which ended the Stuart dynasty, and incidentally led to the downfall of Andros,—John Quincy seems to us in a way very remote. He belongs to the period of Queen Anne, of Marlborough and of the fourteenth Louis. He was contemporary with Peter the Great. And yet, seen in another way, he to me seems very near. For, as he lay dying at Mt. Wollaston, a great-grandson, the child of a daughter’s daughter, was born to him, and was given his name. I, a descendant of his, was already in my thirteenth year when that great-grandson of John Quincy died. Thus one overlapping life carries him now addressing you back to Governor Andros and the time of the Stuarts,—back to the Revolution of 1688 and the Colonial Period of Massachusetts, back to a time anterior to Peter the Great. It seems as though I had but to reach out my hand, and it touches them. Seen thus, the twentieth century becomes closely linked with the seventeenth.

And now, in closing, I have a confession to make. Some years ago it devolved on me to prepare an inscription for that tablet to John Quincy which faces you yonder on the wall, east of this pulpit. A descendant of Colonel Quincy, I thought at the time I had prepared that inscription with care and accurately. Later, to my own great mortification, I learned that I had begun it in ignorance, and gone on to a misstatement of fact. It records that he was born in 1689, not giving the exact date of his birth, and goes on to add that his birthplace was Braintree. And yet it so chances that I myself had





MEMORIAL TABLET TO JOHN QVINCY

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previously discovered, as the result of my own researches, that John Quincy, born on the 21st of July, came into being, not in Braintree, but in Boston. Having made this confession, I propose to pass my error along, and put the responsibility for it where it belongs. I have said that I myself, in the course of investigations made years before, had discovered, and first published correctly, both the date and place of John Quincy's birth. When, however, I came to preparing an inscription for the enduring marble, a reference to my own writings not being convenient, I had recourse to those of Dr. Pattee. I had generally found Dr. Pattee accurate; but in his *History of Old Braintree and Quincy*, page 588, to my lasting confusion, I found the following,—“John Quincy was born in the North Precinct of Braintree in 1689,”—and I accepted the statement! It must, of course, be changed, and the record made correct. Nevertheless, it also affords additional and curious illustration of the fact, so emphasized by Mr. Wilson, that John Quincy had in our generation become legendary, and a character hardly less fabulous than he who gave name to Rome, when I, a descendant, preparing the inscription to be graven on the tablet for which he for whom Quincy was named had waited a century and a third, was unable to specify the precise date of his birth, and gave the place thereof incorrectly.

At the conclusion of this address the congregation, invited by the President, arose and sang “Old Hundred.” The Benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Ellery Chan-



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ning Butler, ended the exercises. The people lingered for a while to examine the two tablets,—that to John Quincy and the one to Charles Francis Adams; and to greet one another, and to welcome strangers.

**M B 2.4.2**







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